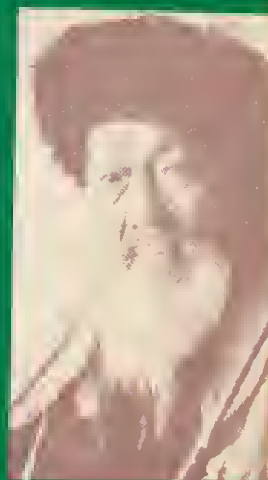




*Nations
&
Peoples
The
Soviet
Experience*

*Edited by
Marilyn Bechtel
Daniel Rosenberg*



Nations & Peoples: The Soviet Experience

Edited by
Marilyn Bechtel and Daniel Rosenberg

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FOREWORD

One of the most important issues of our time is the continued existence of racism and national oppression in a substantial portion of the world. Except in places such as South Africa, official advocacy of special oppression on the basis of race or nationality is rare. Nonetheless, that such oppression continues to exist in many countries is clear, and confirmed by statistics on unemployment, personal income, educational levels, health status, life expectancy, housing status and other measures of well-being. Denying that a problem exists, ignoring the legacy of past oppression, refusing to take positive measures to overcome it — all serve to perpetuate and intensify discrimination on the basis of race and nationality.

An issue often raised by well-meaning people — even those actively engaged in working for economic and social justice — is whether racism and national oppression are simply part of “human nature,” and whether, therefore, their elimination is a noble goal that cannot be attained in real life.

The issue transcends national borders. Newly independent countries must cope with the economic and social legacies of centuries of colonial domination by Britain and Western Europe, and more recently by the United States. In addition, they must deal daily with the current, less direct but often no less thorough-going economic domination by transnational corporations, many of them based in the United States. From time to time, when they pursue economic and social goals which would free them from such domination, they are “rescued” from their folly, as US troops recently “rescued” Grenada.

All these issues have a direct relation to the overriding urgent problem of our times — preserving peace and overcoming nuclear holocaust. Indeed, some of the world’s hottest potential flash-points relate directly to racial and national issues — the Middle East and southern Africa, for example. To the extent that racism and national oppression continue, peace is vulnerable. And to the extent that progress is made on the road to peace, oppressed peoples — wherever they are — have better conditions in their struggle for equality.

More than sixty years ago, a giant social experiment was begun which has significant bearing on that all-important question: is racism a fundamental human trait, or is it a creature of economic and social factors, and therefore subject to elimination through changes in those factors?

Long before they achieved power in Russia in 1917, the Bolsheviks under-

stood that their theoretical vision of socialism could never come to life unless all the peoples of their huge country worked together to build the new society, and saw their own interests, as individuals and as groups, embodied in the process. It would have been difficult to find a more complex situation in regard to national and racial relations than that which the Bolsheviks inherited from tsarist Russia. As Imperial Russia expanded over centuries, the economic, social and political oppression of ordinary Ukrainians, Uzbeks and native Siberians by their own rulers was intensified by Russian national and racial oppression. In classic "divide and rule" tactics, friction and clashes between nationalities were systematically encouraged.

Economic and social inequalities were enormous. Bad as conditions were for Russian farmers and workers, they were far worse for their Georgian and Azerbaidzhani counterparts. The non-Russian parts of the country were systematically drained of their resources. There was no education or health system, and in most regions no industrialization or modernization of agriculture.

In the years immediately following the 1917 revolution, to pose the question of equality was to pose the commitment of vast economic and social resources to intensified development of these regions, at a time when even the most developed areas were devastated by war, civil war and intervention, and the very survival of the revolution was at stake. It was also to pose the need for acute sensitivity on the part of those from more developed areas who went to help in the development process, for the necessary changes had to be made *by* the peoples themselves, not made *for* them.

Many divergent views have been expressed by Western commentators concerning the results of the experiment. Some have held the Soviet Union up as an outstanding example of the elimination of inequality and friction in national and racial relations. Most have painted a picture of a Russian majority scared stiff of being inundated by the more rapidly increasing Central Asian peoples, speculated that increasing friction among nationalities would lead to a fragmenting of Soviet society, and asserted that the old process of Russian imperialist exploitation continues both within and beyond the USSR's borders.

The recent period offers some mileposts from which to survey the status of relationships among peoples within the USSR, and to consider the historical context, together with the economic, social, cultural and political processes which have taken place. November 1982 marked the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the USSR, and January 1984 the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Soviet constitution which gave the USSR its legal foundation.

In *Nations and Peoples*, US and Soviet authors — scholars, journalists and activists with a special interest in questions of racial and national relations, examine both the present reality and its history, and discuss the significance of internal policies for the development of the Soviet Union's foreign relations. The book features the complete text of the address by Yuri Andropov on the

occasion of the sixtieth anniversary celebration in Moscow.

Selection and editing of materials has been done by Marilyn Bechtel and Daniel Rosenberg. Several chapters have appeared in briefer form as articles in recent issues of *New World Review*. David Laibman assisted in the planning, as did *New World Review's* late editor emeritus, Jessica Smith, whose lifelong all-encompassing devotion to understanding and friendship between the peoples of the US and USSR, and to improved relations between the two countries and world peace, provided constant inspiration and guidance.

The editors extend deep appreciation to all who contributed chapters, and to Novosti Press Agency Publishing House and Compass Publications, publishers of *Reprints from the Soviet Press*, for furnishing English translations of chapters by Soviet authors.

THE EDITORS

Part One

A New Approach to the National Question

YURI V. ANDROPOV

The USSR is Sixty Years Old

This report was delivered by Mr. Andropov, general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the joint special session of the CPSU Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic, on December 21, 1982. Translation is courtesy Reprints from the Soviet Press.

Sixty years ago the peoples of our country, already emancipated by the victorious October Revolution, united voluntarily to form the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In closing the first, unification congress of the Soviet republics, which proclaimed the USSR, Mikhail Kalinin said: "For thousands of years humankind's finest minds have been struggling with the theoretical problem of finding the forms that would give the peoples the possibility, without the greatest of torment, without internecine strife, of living side by side in friendship and brotherhood. Practically speaking, the first step in this direction is only being taken now, today."

The development of capitalism did not lead to the abolition of national oppression. On the contrary, national oppression was only compounded and aggravated by colonial oppression. Having enslaved hundreds of millions of people, a handful of capitalist powers sentenced them to stagnation, cutting off their road to progress.

Marxism was the first to show that the nationalities question is organically linked to society's social, class structure, to the predominant type of property. In other words, relations between nationalities have their roots in social soil. This is what brought Marx and Engels around to the fundamental conclusion that abolition of social oppression was the precondition and prerequisite for the abolition of national oppression. It was Marx who said: "The victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie is at the same time the signal of liberation for all oppressed nations." Proclaimed by the founders of Marxism, the immortal slogan, "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" became the call for an international struggle of working people against all forms of enslavement — both social and national.

In new historical conditions the work of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels was continued by Lenin. Lenin headed the revolutionary movement at a time when the dawn of revolution was rising over Russia. Naturally, in a country justifiably called the prison of peoples," the nationalities question was given a prominent place when the Bolshevik Party was elaborating its strategy and tactics.

Lenin focused his attention on the right of nations to self-determination as the

single dependable means of ensuring their actual and steady coming together. It was only the right to self-determination that could be the ideological and political foundation for the voluntary unity of all nations in the struggle to overthrow tsarism and build a new society. This was how the question was put by Lenin. Such was the core of the policy of the Party of Lenin in regard to the nationalities question.

The October Revolution translated political slogans and demands into the language of day-to-day organizational work. Historical reality itself — formidable economic, social, foreign-policy and defense problems — showed the compelling need to rally the peoples, to unite the republics that sprang up on the ruins of the Russian empire.

What today is taken for granted was far from being self-evident in that turbulent time of transition. The quest for specific forms and political institutions that had to embody the general ideas and propositions of the nationalities program proceeded in sharp debates. Differing opinions came into sharp conflict — from a program for a loose, amorphous association of republics within a confederation to the demand simply to incorporate them in the RSFSR on the basis of autonomy. It took the genius and prestige of Lenin to find and uphold the only sure way — the way of socialist federalism.

What is the essence of the way indicated by Lenin? One may put it briefly as follows: the unequivocally voluntary union of free peoples as the guarantee of maximum stability of the federation of socialist republics; complete equality for all nations and nationalities and a consistent course toward the abolition of not only their juridical but also their actual inequality; the unhampered development of each republic, of each nationality in the framework of fraternal union; and the persevering inculcation of internationalist consciousness and a steadfast course toward the drawing together of all the nations and nationalities inhabiting this country.

In the very year the Soviet Union was formed, Lenin wrote the words that vividly showed his line of thought on the nationalities:

Our five years' experience in settling the national question in a country that contains a tremendous number of nationalities, such as could hardly be found in any other country, gives us the full conviction that under such circumstances the only correct attitude toward the interests of all the nations is to meet those interests in full and provide conditions that preclude any possibility of conflicts on that score. Our experience has left us with the firm conviction that only the closest attention to the interests of various nations can do away with grounds for conflicts, remove mutual mistrust, remove the fear of all intrigue and create that confidence — especially on the part of workers and peasants speaking different languages — without which there can be absolutely no peaceful relations between peoples or anything like a successful development of everything that is of value in present-day civilization.

Lenin's behests and his principles underlying the policy of the nationalities

question are sacred to us. Relying on and steadfastly enforcing them in practice, we have created a powerful state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, whose formulation was not only a major step in the development of socialism but also a crucial turning point in world history.

Results and Aims of the Nationalities Policy

The path traversed by the Soviet Union in sixty years is an epoch in itself. I would say that history has never seen such rapid progress from backwardness, misery and ruin to a mighty, modern great power with an extremely high level of culture and constantly climbing living standards.

What are the most significant results of our development?

- History has fully borne out the theory of Marx and Lenin that the nationalities question can only be settled on a class basis. National discord and all forms of racial and national inequality and oppression have receded into the past together with social antagonisms.

- It has been compellingly demonstrated that the Communist Party and its scientific policy are the guiding force in the socialist settlement of the nationalities question and the guarantor that this settlement is correct.

- Backward outlying regions populated by ethnic minorities, in many of which feudal-patriarchal and even clan relations were still dominant, have completely disappeared.

- An integral unionwide economic complex has formed on the basis of the dynamic economic growth of all the republics, a growth guided by the general state plan.

- There has been a qualitative change of the social structure of the republics: a modern working class has emerged in each of them, the peasants are moving along the new road of collective farming, an intelligentsia of its own has been created, and skilled cadres have been trained in all areas of the life of both state and society.

- A socialist multinational culture has burgeoned on the basis of progressive traditions and of an intensive exchange of cultural values.

- Socialist nations have formed, and these now comprise a new historical community — the Soviet people.

The interests of the republics are intertwining ever more closely, and the mutual assistance and mutual links that direct the creative efforts of the nations and nationalities of the USSR into a single channel are growing more productive. The all-sided development of each of the socialist nations in our country logically brings them ever closer together.

Each of the Union republics — the Russian Federation, the Ukraine and Byelorussia, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, Georgia and Azerbaidzhan, Lithuania and Moldavia, Latvia and Kirghizia, Tadzhikistan and Armenia, Turkmenia and Estonia — each, I repeat, of the Union republics is making an

invaluable contribution to the overall growth of the economy and culture of the Soviet Union. This is not simply an adding together, but a multiplication of our creative capability.

All the nations and nationalities living in the twenty Autonomous Regions and Areas are successfully unfolding their potentialities in a fraternal family. The millions of Germans, Poles, Koreans, Kurds, and people of other nationalities, for whom the Soviet Union long ago became the homeland, are full-fledged Soviet citizens.

The peoples of our country address special words of gratitude to the Russian people. In none of the republics would the present achievements have been conceivable without their disinterested fraternal assistance. The Russian language, which has naturally entered the life of millions of people of every nationality, is a factor of exceptional importance in the country's economic, political and cultural life, in the drawing together of all its nations and nationalities, in making the treasures of world civilization accessible to them.

The new Constitution of the USSR is a major landmark in the consolidation of the national-state foundations of Soviet society. This outstanding document not only sums up the results of earlier development but codifies solid and lasting political-legal principles for the further burgeoning and drawing together of all of the country's nations and nationalities.

The tangible qualitative changes that have taken place in the course of sixty years in the relations between nationalities are evidence that the nationalities question, as it was left to us by the exploiting system, has been settled successfully, finally and irreversibly. For the first time in history the multinational character of a country has turned from a source of weakness into a source of strength and prosperity.

Speaking in this hall exactly ten years ago, Leonid Brezhnev put it very aptly when he said that in this country there have emerged relations that "have no equal in history and we have every right to call these relations the Leninist friendship of peoples. This friendship, comrades, is one of our invaluable gains, one of the most important gains of socialism, which is most dear to the heart of every Soviet citizen. We Soviet people will always safeguard this friendship as our most cherished possession."

Today, on this anniversary, we pay tribute to the many generations of Soviet people of all nationalities, men and women, workers, peasants and intellectuals, Party and Government functionaries, men of the Armed Forces, Communists and non-Party people — to all those who built socialism, upheld it in a bitter war, and made a reality of a millennia-long dream of equality, friendship, and brotherhood among peoples.

What Remains to Be Done

In summing up what has been accomplished, we naturally give most of our attention to what still remains to be done. Our end goal is clear: it is, to quote

Lenin's words, "not only to bring the nations closer together but to fuse them." The Party is well aware that the road to this goal is a long one. On no account must there be either any forestalling of events or any holding back of processes that have already matured.

The successes in settling the nationalities question by no means signify that all the problems generated by the very fact of the life and work of numerous nations and nationalities in a single state have vanished. That would hardly be possible so long as nations exist, so long as there are national distinctions. And these will exist for a long time to come, much longer than class distinctions.

That is why the perfecting of developed socialism — and this is precisely how we can define the basic content of the work of the Party and the people at the present stage — must include a carefully considered, scientific policy on the nationalities question. I should like to speak in more detail on some of its aims.

I have already mentioned what enormous benefits and advantages joining into a single union has given the peoples and republics of our country. However, the potentialities being opened by such a union are far from having been exhausted.

Consider the economy. Modern productive forces demand integration even in the case of different countries. Much more so do they require the close and skillful coordination of the efforts of the various regions and republics of one and the same country. The most judicious utilization of the natural and labor resources and climatic specifics of each republic and the most rational incorporation of this potential into that of the union as a whole is what yield the greatest benefit to each region, each nation and nationality, and to the state as a whole.

Such is the general fundamental guideline. In order to put it into effect, a great deal will have to be done by our central and local planning and economic agencies. There will have to be further improvements in the distribution of the productive forces, of regional specialization and cooperation, and of the patterns of economic links and transportation. This, of course, is no easy task. But it is on our agenda, and its fulfillment holds out the promise of considerable benefit.

The whole country is now working on the Food Program, a program that clearly defines concrete aims for all the Union republics. And each of them will have to work hard in order to make a tangible contribution — in the immediate future — to the key matter of ensuring an uninterrupted supply of food for all Soviet people.

We know that the Program in its adopted form deals with immediate, urgent tasks. But if we take a long-term view, it becomes obvious that a further development of our agro-industrial complex — and, for that matter, the country's economy as a whole — will require the still more in-depth and more consistent specialization of agriculture on a nationwide scale.

One more point: in a vast country like ours, transport plays a particularly

significant role — economic, political and, if you will, psychological.

It is very difficult to ensure the accelerated development of all our republics and further intensification of their economic cooperation without a smoothly functioning transport system. But transport is important not only for purely economic reasons. The development of transport, of the road network, will, for example, greatly help to stabilize personnel in rural communities by bringing rural areas closer to urban ones. It will, of course, help to cope with the major social task of securing the more rational and flexible use of manpower. By facilitating everyday personal contacts on a countrywide scale, by facilitating vital ties between all the republics and areas of our country, transport brings the achievements of our socialist civilization, in the broadest sense of the term, within everyone's reach.

Our joining together in a union has become an added source of material, and, indeed, spiritual wealth for the Soviet people. Here too, however, we certainly still aren't using all of our available potentialities. We should persistently look for new methods and forms of work that suit present-day needs and make for a still more fruitful mutual enrichment of cultures, while giving everyone still broader access to all that is best in the culture of each of our peoples. Radio and television — and naturally, other mass media as well — must play a steadily increasing role in this lofty endeavor.

Of course, here we must remember that there are both good and bad, or outdated, elements in the cultural heritage, traditions and customs of each nation. Hence another task — not to conserve these bad elements but to get rid of all that is outdated and that runs counter to the norms of Soviet community life, to socialist morality, and to our communist ideals.

The record shows that the economic and cultural progress of all nations and nationalities is accompanied by the growth of their national self-awareness. This is a logical, objective process. It is important, however, that the natural pride one takes in the gains attained should not degenerate into national arrogance or conceit, that it should not gravitate toward exclusiveness and lack of respect for other nations and nationalities. Yet such negative phenomena still do occur. And it would be incorrect to attribute them solely to survivals of the past. Among other things, they are sometimes fostered by the mistakes we make in our work. Here, comrades, nothing can be shrugged off as insignificant. Everything counts — the attitude to the language, to monuments of the past, the interpretation of historical events, and the way we transform rural and urban areas and influence living and working conditions.

The natural migration of the population is making each of our republics — and, to varying degrees, each region and each city — increasingly multinational. This means that Party and Government bodies, and all our local cadres, are becoming increasingly instrumental in implementing the Party's nationalities policy. And they have to carry forward the lofty principles of that

policy day after day, ensuring harmonious, fraternal relations between representatives of all nations, both large and small, and of all nationalities, in work and daily life.

The Party has always attached great importance to the growth of the national detachments of the Soviet working class, the leading force of our society. The results are there for everyone to see. These days, workers make up the largest social group in all the Union republics. In some of them, however, the leading, indigenous nationality should be represented in the working class more fully. Hence the task set by the 26th Congress of the CPSU — to expand and improve the training of skilled workers from among all the nations and nationalities residing in the republics. The need for this is both economic and political. Multinational work collectives, above all those in industry, are that very milieu in which the internationalist spirit is best fostered and the fraternal relations and friendship among the peoples of the USSR grow stronger.

Representation in Party and state bodies of the republics and the Union as a whole is also a highly important question. The reference here, of course, is not to any formal quotas. Arithmetic is not the way to deal with the problem of representation. There should be a consistent effort to ensure proper representation of all nationalities in every republic in the various Party and Government bodies at all levels. Unremitting regard for competence, for moral and political qualities, a caring attitude, attentiveness, and finally great tact in selecting and posting cadres are especially necessary in view of the multinational composition of the Union and Autonomous Republics.

An ever-present, and all-important task is to continue instilling in Soviet people a spirit of mutual respect and friendship for all the nations and nationalities of the country, of love for their great Soviet land, of internationalism and solidarity with the working people of other countries. It is up to all Party and Komsomol organizations, the Soviets, trade unions and our Armed Forces — all of which have always been a good school of internationalism — to work toward this end. It should also be an everyday concern of all educational establishments in our country.

In the sphere of internationalist education, as in all our ideological and mass political work, we are facing some major tasks. Concrete and convincing demonstrations of our achievements, an earnest analysis of new problems constantly generated by daily life, and freshness of thought and language — these are the elements we need so as to improve the line we promote, which must always be not only truthful and realistic but interesting and easy to understand as well, and therefore more effective.

Further advancement of friendship and cooperation among the peoples of the USSR depends to a great extent on the deepening of socialist democracy. Increasingly broad involvement of persons of all nationalities in the management of social and state affairs is, to put it in concise terms, the leading trend in

our country's political life. And the Party will do everything possible to promote and advance it.

All this means that problems of relations among nations are still on the agenda in our society of mature socialism. They call for particular care and constant attention on the part of the Communist Party. The Party should delve into them deeply and chart the ways of solving them, enriching the Leninist principles of the nationalities policy with the experience of developed socialism.

We speak boldly both about the existing problems and the outstanding tasks because we know for certain that we are equal to them, that we can and must solve them. A disposition to action rather than rhetoric is what we need, now as always, to make the great and powerful Union of Soviet Socialist Republics even stronger. I am sure that this view is shared by all those gathered in this hall, by our whole Party, by all Soviet people.

The USSR — Buttress of the Great Cause of Peace and Freedom of the Peoples

On December 30, 1922, the very day the Declaration and Treaty on the Formation of the USSR were adopted in Moscow, it was stated at the Lausanne Conference on Lenin's instructions that, guided by the interests of universal peace, the Soviet Republics "consider it their urgent duty to do everything in their power to facilitate the establishment of political equality among races, and respect for the right of peoples to self-determination and of all states to complete political and economic independence."

This was how the essence of the fundamentally new foreign policy which the world's first country of victorious socialism had begun consistently to carry forward was set forth in plain and comprehensive terms.

And as new socialist countries emerged, a completely new type of international relations began to take shape. These relations are based on ideological unity, common goals and comradely cooperation, with full respect for the interests, distinctive features and traditions of each country. At their center is the principle of socialist internationalism.

The socialist countries had to blaze new trails in the development of these relations. Mankind's past experience could not even suggest answers to the problems that history set before them. Naturally, not everything worked out smoothly, or right away, all the more so since the countries which made up the world socialist system started in many ways from different levels — both in terms of domestic development and specific external conditions from the changes within the socialist world itself. The international situation, too, did not always allow time for reflection: the new forms of relations had to be tested on the go, as people say. There were illusions we were forced to abandon and mistakes for which we had to pay a price.

But as we assess the present of our countries, we can say with satisfaction that we have learned a lot, and that the socialist community is now a powerful and healthy organism which is playing an enormously positive and salutary role in the world of today. The mechanism of fraternal cooperation encompasses a variety of spheres in the life of our countries and in various areas of our joint socialist construction. By pooling our resources, we are finding increasingly effective ways of harmonizing the interests of the community with those of each member country.

True, even now we can hardly say that all the difficulties are behind us, that we have attained our ideal. What was good enough yesterday needs improving today. The countries of our community face many serious tasks — those of defending our socialist gains and values against the imperialist onslaught, of fighting together for lasting peace and detente, for further improving our political cooperation, and, finally, for providing new impulses to economic integration.

In short, much still remains to be done. And I would like to assure you that for its part the Soviet Union will do its utmost to make the world socialist system stronger and more prosperous.

The socialist experience of solving the nationalities question is being closely studied in scores of countries which have freed themselves from the colonial yoke. Our achievements in building socialism, our historic victory over fascism, and the flowering of all the Soviet nations and nationalities have served as a powerful stimulant for the national liberation struggle.

The Soviet Union's vigorous and resolute stand for the elimination of colonialism, its unfailing support of the liberation and equality of nations, facilitate their advance to freedom and progress. This is well understood by the peoples of Asia and Africa, the Arab East and Latin America.

The young states that have cast off the colonial yoke are at present going through a difficult period of national self-assertion and social development. They are hampered by their colonial heritage of backwardness, internal strife and conflict. Not yet strong enough, they are in danger of falling into numerous neocolonialist traps. However, we are confident that resolute resistance to imperialism, a well-defined strategy of economic and sociopolitical development, and mutual respect for each other's interests and rights will enable their peoples to overcome these difficulties, which we might describe as growing pains. We Soviet people wish them great success in consolidating their independence and in their fight for prosperity and progress.

We respect the nonaligned movement whose policy of peace is making a useful contribution to international relations. We are squarely and unswervingly on the side of those who still have to fight for freedom, independence and the very survival of their peoples, those who are forced to rebuff aggression or are threatened with it. Our position here is inseparable from the Soviet Union's

consistent and tireless drive for lasting peace on our planet.

Over these six decades the position of our Soviet state has changed radically; its prestige and influence have grown enormously. Close peaceful cooperation links the Soviet Union with countries on all continents. Its voice commands respect at international forums. The principles of peaceful coexistence — the basis of Soviet foreign policy — have won broad international recognition and have been incorporated into scores of international instruments, including the Final Act of the European Conference in Helsinki. Soviet proposals have been the basis for major UN decisions on strengthening peace and security.

But each step along the road to more stable peace has taken and still takes a lot of effort; it calls for intense struggle against imperialist war hawks. This struggle has become especially acute now that the more warlike factions in the West have become so aggressively active, their class-based hatred of socialism prevailing over considerations of realism and sometimes over plain common sense.

The imperialists have not given up their scheme for economic war against the socialist countries, for interfering in their internal affairs in the hope of eroding their social system, and are trying to win military superiority over the USSR, over all the countries of the socialist community.

Of course, these plans are sure to fail. It is not given to anyone to turn back the course of historical development. Attempts to "strangle" socialism failed even when the Soviet state was still just getting on its feet and was the only socialist country in the world. So too, surely, nothing will come of it now.

But one cannot help seeing that Washington's present policy has sharpened the international situation to dangerous extremes. The war preparations of the United States and the NATO bloc which it leads have grown on an unheard-of, record scale. Official spokesmen in Washington have been heard to talk at length on the possibility of "limited," "sustained," and other varieties of nuclear war. This is intended to reassure the man in the street, to accustom people to the idea that such war is acceptable. And yet one would have to be blind to the realities of our time not to see that wherever and however a nuclear whirlwind arises, it will inevitably go out of control and precipitate a worldwide catastrophe.

The Struggle to Prevent Nuclear War

Our position on this issue is clear: a nuclear war — be it big or small, limited or total — must not be allowed to break out. No task is more important today than to stop the instigators of another war. This is dictated by the vital interests of all nations. That is why the unilateral commitment of the Soviet Union not to be the first to use nuclear weapons was received with approval and hope all over the world. If our example is followed by the other nuclear powers, this will be a truly momentous contribution to the effort to prevent nuclear war.

It is being said that the West cannot undertake such a commitment because, allegedly, the Warsaw Treaty Alliance has an advantage in conventional armaments. To begin with, this is untrue, a fact to which the facts and figures bear witness. Furthermore, as everyone knows, we are in favor of limiting such armaments as well, and of searching for sensible, mutually acceptable solutions to this end. We are also prepared to agree that both sides should renounce first use of conventional, as well as nuclear, arms.

Of course, one of the main avenues leading to a real scaling down of the threat of nuclear war is that of reaching a Soviet-American agreement on the limitation and reduction of strategic nuclear arms. We approach negotiations on this matter with the utmost seriousness and sense of responsibility, and seek an honest agreement that will do no damage to either side and will, at the same time, lead to a reduction of the nuclear arsenals.

So far, unfortunately, we see a different approach on the part of the American side. While calling for "radical reductions" in word, what Washington really has in mind is essentially a reduction of the Soviet strategic potential. For itself, the United States would like to leave a free hand in building up strategic armaments. It is absurd even to think that we can agree on this. It would, of course, suit the Pentagon, but can on no account be acceptable to the Soviet Union or, for that matter, to anyone who has a stake in preserving and consolidating peace.

Compare to this the proposals of the USSR. They are based on the principle of preserving parity. We are prepared to reduce our strategic arms by more than 25 percent. United States arms, too, must be reduced accordingly, so that the two states might have the same number of strategic delivery vehicles. We also propose that the number of nuclear warheads should be substantially decreased and that further improvement of nuclear weapons should be maximally restricted.

Our proposals refer to all types of strategic weapons without exception, and envisage reduction of their stockpiles by many hundreds of units. They close all possible channels for any further arms race in this field. And that is only a start: the pertinent agreement would be the point of departure for a still larger mutual reduction of such weapons, which the two sides could work out with reference to the general strategic situation in the world.

And while the negotiations are under way, we offer what is suggested by common sense: to freeze the strategic arsenals of the two sides. The US Government does not want this, and now everyone can understand why: it has embarked on a new, considerable buildup of nuclear armaments.

Washington's attempts to justify this buildup are obviously irrelevant. The allegation of a "lag" behind the USSR, which the Americans must close, is a deliberate untruth. This has been said more than once. And the talk that new weapons systems such as the MX missile are meant "to facilitate disarmament

negotiations" is altogether absurd.

No program of a further arms buildup will ever force the Soviet Union to make unilateral concessions. We will be compelled to counter the challenge of the American side by deploying corresponding weapons systems of our own — an analogous missile to counter the MX missile, and our own long-range cruise missile, which we are now testing — to counter the US long-range cruise missile.

These are certainly not threats on our part. We are wholly averse to any such course of events, and are doing everything possible to avoid it. But it is essential that those who shape US policy, as well as the public at large, should be perfectly clear on the true state of affairs. Hence, if the men in Washington really believe that new weapons systems would mean a "trump card" for the Americans at the negotiating table, we want them to know that such "trumps" are false. A policy directed at securing military superiority over the Soviet Union has no future and can only heighten the threat of war.

Now a few words about what are known as confidence-building measures. We are serious about these.

Given the swift action and power of modern weapons, the atmosphere of mutual suspicion is especially dangerous. Even a trivial accident, miscalculation, or technical failure can have tragic consequences. It is therefore important to take the finger off the trigger and put a reliable safety catch on all weapons. A few things have already been accomplished to this end, particularly in the framework of the Helsinki accords. As everyone knows, the Soviet Union is also offering measures of a more far-reaching nature and of broader scope. Our proposals on this score have been placed on the agenda of the Soviet-American Geneva negotiations on the limitation and reduction of nuclear armaments.

We are also prepared to consider pertinent proposals made by others, including the recent ones by the US President. But the measures he referred to are not enough to dispel the atmosphere of mutual suspicion and to restore confidence. Something more is needed: to normalize the situation and to renounce the incitement of hostility and hatred, of beating the drums for nuclear war. And surely the road to confidence, to preventing any and all wars, including an accidental one, is that of stopping the arms race and going back to calm, correct relations between states, back to detente.

We consider this important for all regions of the globe, and especially for Europe, where a flareup of any kind may trigger a worldwide explosion.

At present, that continent is beset by a new danger — the prospect of several hundred US missiles being deployed in Western Europe. I must speak frankly: such a move would make peace still more fragile.

As we see it, the peril threatening the European nations, and, for that matter, the nations of the whole world can be averted. It is definitely possible to save and strengthen peace in Europe — and this without damage to anyone's

security. It is, indeed, for this purpose that we have been negotiating with the United States in Geneva for more than a year already on how to limit and reduce nuclear weapons in the European zone.

The Soviet Union is prepared to go very far. As everyone knows, we have suggested an agreement renouncing all types of nuclear weapons — both medium range and tactical ones — designed to strike targets in Europe. But this proposal has come up against a solid wall of silence. Evidently the other side does not want to accept it, yet is afraid to reject it openly. I want to reaffirm again that we have not withdrawn this proposal.

We have also suggested another variant: that the USSR and the NATO countries reduce their medium-range weaponry by more than two-thirds. So far, the United States will not consider this. For its part, it has submitted a proposal which, as if in mockery, is called the "zero option." It envisages elimination of all Soviet medium-range missiles not only in the European, but also in the Asian part of the Soviet Union, while NATO's nuclear-missile arsenal in Europe is to remain intact and may even be increased. Does anyone really think that the Soviet Union can agree to this? It would seem that Washington is out to deliberately block agreement and then, after pointing to a collapse of talks, by hook or by crook to achieve the stationing of its missiles on European soil.

The future will show if this is so. We, for our part, will continue to work for an agreement on a basis that is fair to both sides. We are prepared, among other things, to agree that the Soviet Union should retain in Europe only as many missiles as are kept there by Britain and France — and not a single one more. This means that the Soviet Union would reduce its missiles by hundreds, including dozens of the latest missiles known in the West as SS-20s. In the case of the USSR and the USA, this would be a really honest "zero" option as regards medium-range missiles. And if later on the number of British and French missiles were scaled down, the number of Soviet ones would be additionally reduced by as many.

Along with this there must also be an accord on reducing to equal levels on both sides the number of medium-range nuclear-delivery aircraft stationed in this region by the USSR and the NATO countries.

We call on the other side to accept these clear and fair terms, to take this opportunity while it still exists. But let no one delude himself: we will never let our security or the security of our allies be jeopardized. It would also be a good thing if thought were given to the grave consequences that the stationing of new US medium-range weapons in Europe would entail for all further efforts to limit nuclear armaments in general. In short, the answer is now up to the USA.

In conclusion, let me say the following. We are for broad, faithful cooperation among all the nations of our planet to their mutual advantage and in the interests of all mankind — cooperation free from diktat and interference in the

affairs of other countries. The Soviet Union will do everything in its power to secure a peaceful, untroubled future for the present and future generations. That is the aim of our policy, and we shall not depart from it.

Comrades, looking back at the path traveled by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in sixty years, we see clearly that all our achievements and victories are indissolubly linked with the activity of Lenin's Communist Party. The Party has been, and remains, that powerful creative and mobilizing force which ensures steady social progress in all fields.

In ideology, composition and structure, our Party is a living expression of the unity and cohesion of all the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union. Shaping its policy to ensure harmony between national and international interests, the Party is creating social conditions in which the flowering and all-around development of each Soviet nation is the condition for the advancement and flowering of our entire fraternal union.

When we say that the people and the Party are united, this is a statement of the irrefutable fact that the aims and tasks the Party has set itself are an accurate expression of the aspirations and needs of all Soviet people. The millions of citizens of the Soviet Union are by their deeds, carrying into effect the policy of the Party. Among the most apparent proofs of this are the successes all the republics have achieved by the date of the present jubilee.

Comrades, let me express gratification and deep gratitude to the millions of front-rankers who have fulfilled and overfulfilled their socialist pledges made in tribute to the sixtieth anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Permit me, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the USSR, to express my warmest congratulations to the whole Soviet people on this momentous day, the birthday of our great Union. Long may it flourish! □

2

HOWARD L. PARSONS

Nations, Nationality, Internationalism, and Peace: The Soviet Position

In class societies, particularly capitalist ones, "nationalism" has meant devotion of a specific people with a common territory, economy, language, culture, political order and society to their own "nation." It has also meant excessive and exclusive patriotism, prejudices of national chauvinism, mistrust, rivalry and destructive competition between national groups within a society and between different national states, domination and exploitation of one national group by another, the dependency of some nations on others, infringement of the independence of nations, violation of the sovereignty of ethnic minorities within national states, interference in the internal affairs of some nations by others, racism, and even attempted genocide of some national peoples. One has only to review the history of twentieth century imperialism, with its colonialism and fascism, its racism and apartheid, to realize that nationalism in this dehumanizing sense has been endemic to class societies.

The national state in the modern sense and the nationalism that grows out of it are creations of the economic and political transformation that produced capitalism out of feudalism. This was a long-term transformation defined by the convergence of many forces — the displacement of the guild system of production by the centralized, concentrated production of manufacturing, the secular ideological shift associated with the Renaissance and Reformation and the scientific, technological changes brought about during the Renaissance, consciousness of common vernacular languages and common histories (greatly enhanced by the printing press and the spread of common literature), the democratic-revolutionary movements of peasants and urban workers, the struggle of provincial princes for land and trade routes and the consequent rise of powerful European monarchies, the bourgeois demand for control of the home market and the struggle for new markets, the emergence of contending empires in Europe, the expansion of overseas navigation and the exploitation of colonial territories, enmities and wars between the great national empires, the

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slave trade and slavery, and the establishment of the world market with its national rivalries.

As Marx and Engels put it in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, this revolution, with its specialized and integrated production and its urban population, generated whole nations; and it has drawn "all nations, even the most barbarian, into civilization." The creation of nations has been a progressive step; it has drawn people out of the slumber of rural feudalism and has helped to actualize their individual and social potentialities. At the same time, capitalism has created barriers within and between nations in this world market, barriers that have continuously frustrated and spoiled the possibilities of nations and peoples it had brought into being. Slavery and devastating international wars are only two examples of this contradiction inherent in the international order raised up in the history of capitalism.

The proliferation of so many nations in the last forty years (there are now 157 in the United Nations Organization) has led some to see the conflict between nations as the basic one in the world — east vs. west, north vs. south, nations of the countryside vs. nations of the cities, developing nations vs. developed nations, poor vs. rich, colored vs. white. Some even see the basic struggle in the world as one between the two nuclear "superpowers" or between the non-nuclear powers and the nuclear powers.

But nationality (national feeling, custom, state organization) is not the prime moving force of history. Economy is. The material forces of production, the relations of classes in production, the class struggle — these are the main shapers of human living. Economics may (or may not) have a national form; but economy is always there, while the national form is transient and is not necessary.

Still, in the modern world, nationality is a potent force. But people overestimate its potency because of its dual character. It is psychological, social, linguistic, and cultural. At the same time it is physical, territorial, and ecological. The subjective feelings and ideas of nationality are rooted in the objective soil and water and air, in the people's homes and tools, in their artifacts and art, in their cities and monuments. The love of motherland, of *patria*, is a tender feeling of unity with and protectiveness toward these physical things, a pride in their presence, a nostalgia when absent. Nationality is heavy physical social habit, merged with the nation's language that gives meaning and value to that physical history. Born into and inheriting such historical habit, people come to define their identities as national. So national tradition acquires potency. We have seen how it strongly forms and colors the character of each socialist society; and by clever use of nationalist sentiment politicians have been able to deviate socialism from its true goals. Thus, nations can be feudal, capitalist, or socialist; they can be progressive or reactionary, depending on the level of development and the economic-political class in power.

The sense of nationality in the modern world reflects the striving of a people for unity in opposition to a different nation, class, or people. The modern nation is a phenomenon growing out of the early revolt of the bourgeoisie against feudalism (as in the first monarchical nation-states) and out of the later revolt of colonial peoples against oppressive capitalist nations compelled "to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station" to which they felt entitled (as in the American revolution against the British and in the Vietnamese revolution against the French, Japanese, and Americans).

Nations and Nationality in the Nuclear Era

The first nations in the full sense were capitalist by historical necessity; bourgeois commerce, as Lenin pointed out, needed control of the home market, a unified political territory, and a common language.¹

The evolution of nations and nationality is not simple. Born out of class struggle with another class society, nations are divided and torn by class struggle inside and outside. Thus the sense of nationality carries within it the seeds of popular democracy which, if the people are to develop, must outgrow the limitations of the capitalist integument and move toward a socialized form. If it does not, the nation born in liberation may itself turn into an oppressor: the revolutionary US of 1776 has become in 1982 the world's leading counter-revolutionary power.

Thus, while the strongest nations today are the capitalist US and the socialist USSR, with corresponding nations clustered around them — the non-aligned nations standing as a third force — the basic conflict between them is not national but economic (and consequently military). It is this *class* conflict that mainly determines the course of the world and explains the policies and actions of each side and their relations to one another. True, the spread of nuclear weapons since 1945 has radically qualified this class conflict, for nuclear war would be self-contradictory for both sides. The human alternative is the arrest and reversal of the arms race and peaceful coexistence of opposed social systems, whether capitalist, socialist, or non-aligned. This alternative will not erase class conflict from history but will make it possible for it to continue in a peaceful way. The alternative of "Better dead than red" is a choice to end the class struggle by holocaust rather than to risk loss in the living struggle of classes and nations.

Lenin wrote that "the formation of independent national states is the tendency in all bourgeois-democratic revolutions."² The democratic power within all evolving capitalist nationalism gives to nationalism its ambiguous and self-contradictory character. This is not the formal and abstract structure of bourgeois democracy, which is a compromise and concession to a deeper demand; it is rather the collective force of the workers and peasants themselves, a power which calls for self-determination and liberation from oppression and

which achieves its demand only partially through a bourgeois revolution and under a bourgeois democracy. Only when the limitations of the bourgeois state and nationalism are overcome can the people secure their complete democracy and a national loyalty freed from the deformations of capitalism. Thus the national liberation movements during the recent period of imperialism represent a progressive thrust of the peoples within the nationalism of capitalism, a people's national negation of a class national negation.

Nations, nationhood, and nationalism have a special importance today because during and since World War II more than one hundred nations have been liberated from imperialism and colonialism; the non-socialist nations have a population of more than one billion, the emergent socialist nations have another billion people, and together they constitute a formidable force in the world, in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and in the United Nations Organization. Though they range from socialist Cuba to conservative Saudi Arabia, they all represent a powerful, objective, anti-imperialist movement in the contemporary world, a movement that is national in form and as such resistant to the traditional control by capitalist nations.

Is it possible for a person or a people to be devoted to a nation as a whole or to an ethnic group within the nation and at the same time to respect and cooperate with other national groups within the state and outside it? Some persons say no; they believe that everything connected with nationality is constricting and must be gotten rid of before the peoples of the world can live in harmony and peace. This is a utopian view. Nations, national boundaries and traditions, and national psychology and loyalties are well established. They provide people with a sense of social identity and historical direction. The problem now is not to get rid of national sentiment and tradition but to transform it into a creative, constructive, cooperative activity that sustains the human values of each national group and at the same time builds an inter-national order of mutual respect and cooperation of independent and equal ethnic groups and national states.

History shows that the principal obstruction to achieving this order is the oppression and predation built into class societies, especially capitalism. Capitalist nations as a whole are ruled by a class impelled by the principles of exploitation, acquisition, accumulation, and maximum profit. "Nationalism" for such a class cannot mean democracy, tolerance, universal freedom and equality of individuals or nations, and mutual respect for all ethnic groups, races, and nations. It must mean, rather, the use of any and all natural resources, machinery, workers, peasants, people, ethnic and racial groups, and nations for that class' interest and advantage.

Within its own national borders, the capitalist class makes use of ethnic inequality and prejudice by driving down the wages of ethnic minorities, cultivating dissension among ethnic groups, and reinforcing the institutions and

ideas that support ethnic prejudice and racism. Abroad, the capitalist class appropriates the natural resources of native peoples and brings the working people into the orbit of its subjection, doing all in the name of its superior "way of life." Capitalism has had nothing but contempt and destructive impulses toward the peoples' democratic national dispositions within its own nation and toward the national movements within other nations. Of course it covers up its cynicism and necrophilia with the flag and patriotic slogans. But its real interest is profits. And insofar as it has any interest in its nation, it twists the nation's interest so that it appears as identical with its own. As Charles E. Wilson put it, "What is good for the United States is good for the General Motors Corporation and vice versa."

For the people of an imperialist nation, such deformed nationality means that they are deprived of the best in their national tradition, are denied full access to the wealth of their country and the products of their labor, are barred from acquisition and use of the tools of democracy — literacy, knowledge, education, vocational training — are deceived and mystified by lies and myths about their true national history, are divided against each other by ethnic and racist prejudices, and are misled by distorted ideas about the nature and history of peoples and nations abroad whom their leaders have subjugated to their class interests or are endeavoring to subjugate.

For the imperialists the "foreign" defines the sphere of power and thought that stands over against the success of imperialist class interest; it includes not only indigenous peoples, ethnic racial minorities, and various immigrant groups at home, but also colonized, dependent, conquered, and resistant peoples abroad, and even peoples of other imperialist countries that have turned against the would-be hegemonic imperialist power. Nationalism under capitalism has thus taken two forms, foreign and domestic: great-power chauvinism, or the drive to dominate and subdue nations and people abroad, which is accompanied by what Lenin called "the narrow egoism of the small privileged nations;"³ and the nationalism confined to the homeland, in which an oppressor nationality lords it over an oppressed nationality and the oppressed people react with distrust, withdrawal, and even a compensatory, reverse contempt toward the oppressor nationality and other nationalities (as in Zionism).

Is there an alternative to such deformed nationality? Yes — it is the national policy of socialist societies, in the first instance the USSR, that conceives and pursues a position of genuine respect for the needs and interests of peoples, both its own and those abroad. National interests that fully reflect the needs of a people are only one form of their interests in general: they are the interests of the working people in food, shelter, clothing, cooperation, creativity, education, the arts, the sciences, peace, and the manifold other values that comprise human development and fulfillment — as these interests are expressed and

embodied in a particular national tradition and way of life.

Class societies and capitalist societies especially are so structured that respect for human interests in general is impossible and contradictory to the underlying motive and main direction of class society. Indeed, disrespect, disdain, the dehumanization of human needs are demanded by class rule. And when human interests are expressed in national form, capitalist society must confront them as such and frustrate and deform them as best it can.

The first socialist state, the USSR, dismantled the class structure of the old capitalist society and established a society built on the rule of the workers and peasants. It thus removed the primary historical cause of deformed nationality and put into place the foundation for a humanistic national policy both within the *Union* of the different republics of the new society and in the relations of the Union to other peoples and nations struggling for their liberation and independence from colonial and imperialist domination. Under socialism, nationalism means self-determination; under capitalism, it means oppression and dependency. In 1914 Lenin summarized the position of the Russian Marxists' Program:

Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the unity of the workers of all nations. . . ."⁴

Long before the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin and the other Bolsheviks were aware of the history of old Russia as "the prisonhouse of nations" and of the oppressive weight of Great-Russian nationalism. They understood the national question in the context and under the control of the class struggle and the achieving of socialism. The free and equal development of nationalities requires bringing the economies and cultures of backward peoples up to the level of the more advanced. It requires fraternity, unity, and cooperation of the peoples. These tasks have been accomplished in the creation of the single multinational community of the USSR. In this, the Russian Federation set the pace; itself a multinational state, it rendered generous assistance to other people of the new country. And the Bolshevik revolution in itself inspired many peoples with the idea of national independence from oppression.

The logic of history has extended the socialist principle of inter-national relations to a global scale; the rise of other socialist states embracing one-third of the people of the world has been followed by socialist mutual assistance and a unique economic and cultural community; and the emergence of newly liberated, ex-colonial nations (one-half of the world's population) has called out the long-term, consistent, and untiring support of these developing nations by the USSR as well as by other socialist nations. The international ties of the USSR also reach out in cooperation with other Communist Parties, fraternal parties, the working class of other countries, and progressive groups and movements working for peace and progress. This policy of internationalism is not new. Since the Decree on Peace of November 8, 1917, the USSR has adhered to the

principles of self-determination and of peaceful coexistence among nations of different social systems. This adherence is not a mere political tactic. It is rooted in the nature of socialism.

The Class Basis of Policies on Aid

A socialist nation, particularly the first one, cannot confine its energies to its own development and let the rest of world pass by. As a working class society, it must be concerned about the working people of the whole world and about the world-wide class struggle going on within nations, in nation-to-nation relations, and in movements that cut across nations and transcend them. A capitalist nation-state puts itself over against other nations; a socialist state must support the efforts of working people in their established nations and in their drive toward national liberation — it must be internationalist in outlook and practice, partisan toward a world-wide class struggle that is expressed in particular national forms and other forms. Capitalist nations are isolated from the main tendencies of historical development and aggressively anti-progressive, exporting counterrevolution. Socialist nations cannot remain isolated, nor can they export revolutions; they are committed by the necessity of human need and history to aid the world revolutionary process whenever and wherever they can. This is not terrorism or war-making. It is simply support of the forces in the world making for liberation from repression, for justice, democracy, peace, and social progress.

The record of Soviet aid to developing countries is a record of assistance based on mutual advantage and voluntary cooperation in the absence of special indebtedness. In the 1920s the USSR helped Mongolia build enterprises, and in the 1930s it assisted Turkey and Afghanistan in constructing textile mills and Iran in making rice-hulling mills. In 1955 the USSR had economic and technical agreements with two developing countries, but by 1979 there were sixty-four such agreements — twenty-one in Asia, thirty-three in Africa and ten in Latin America. More than six hundred projects have been constructed in these developing countries with the help of Soviet agencies, and nearly as many are now under construction or in process of design. The cooperative agreements are carried out within the state sectors — in contrast to aid from capitalist countries, which concentrates on aid to private capital. In addition, almost three-fourths of the economic and technical assistance is put into industries, chiefly the heavy industries of metallurgy, engineering, and mining, as well as the power industry. For example, the metallurgical mill at Bhilai in India, built with Soviet-Indian cooperation, has for two decades been India's biggest and most efficient plant in ferrous metallurgy. Likewise, in Asia and Africa the plants built with Soviet aid turned out, in 1977, more than forty per cent of pig iron and about thirty per cent of the steel in all of the developing countries in those continents.

The Aswan High Dam in Egypt, built with Soviet aid, generated in 1977 more than half of the country's total electrical output. Several large power plants have been constructed in Afghanistan, and similar plants are under construction in Iraq, Iran, and other countries. Bauxite in Guinea, oil fields in Iraq, Syria, India, and Algeria, oil refineries in India, Turkey, Egypt, and Ethiopia, oil-products pipelines in Nigeria and Iraq; agriculture in Afghanistan, Guinea, and Mali — all have been developed through joint agreements and cooperation.

Trained workers — engineers, technicians, skilled workers — are needed as well as extracted natural resources, and the Soviet Union has trained nearly 550,000 specialists in developing countries, most of them in the course of construction and operation of the joint projects. In addition, there are some 20,000 students from developing countries enrolled at higher schools in the USSR, the best known being the Lumumba People's Friendship University in Moscow. Also the USSR has helped or is now helping to build one hundred fifty schools in those countries.

The USSR offers long-term credit to developing nations (up to fifteen years), making possible planning for stable development. Pay-back in products enhances their export resource and capacity to pay. Soviet interest rates are 2.5 to 3 per cent per year, as compared with most capitalist loans of 5 to 7 per cent and higher.⁵ This kind of aid, which goes to the basic infrastructure through the government and is a big step toward independence, self-determination, and eradication of structural poverty, stands in graphic contrast to aid from the US, which aims at "stability" by channeling aid to selected repressive regimes that in cooperation with multinational corporations benefit the few who are rich and deprive the many already poor.

The authors of *Aid as Obstacle*⁶ show in great detail how US aid — through the Agency for International Development (AID), Aid Program, Commodity Credit Corporation, International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group, etc. — is flagrantly ineffective in dealing with poverty in developing countries and often deepens the poverty. The causes of this failure are: the aid is concentrated not on the poorest countries, but on those of strategic economic and military importance; economic aid is supplemented with military aid to repressive regimes that share common interests with multinational corporations and prevent the poor from sharing economic and decision-making power; aid benefits the powerful and better-off, reinforcing their "stranglehold" over the productive forces and, where multinational agribusiness benefits, driving the rural poor to the wretched urban slums; only twenty per cent of the food aid goes to the rural poor, because the governments that receive the food (most of them repressive) distribute it to the military, police, and civil services, employees of large enterprises, and cash-holding middle-class people who can buy it; aid supports "the local, national, and international elites" whose economic power generates poverty; aid programs are based on (1) the false premise that the poor

must be brought *into* the development process — whereas that process is controlled by and for the rich at home and abroad — and (2) the false premise that backwardness must be overcome by "material incentives and benevolent prods" — whereas true development must be social and democratic in the ownership and control of land, agriculture, industry, and other productive power; and US government agencies are incapable of correctly diagnosing this problem lest Americans question their own economic system.

"Linkage" and the Prospects for Peace

In the international struggle of capitalism against socialism, the US military-industrial-political complex, still guided by sixteenth century piratical standards, has refused to accept in practice the principles of international law now formulated in the UN Charter. For all nations, developed or developing, large or small, old or young, these principles include the equality of all nations in international affairs, non-interference and refrainment from domination or hegemony, respect for territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders, non-support of separatist movements, recognition of the sovereignty of each nation over its natural resources, support of efforts to eliminate colonialism, racism, and apartheid, respect for non-alignment status, and refrainment from drawing other nations into military and political blocs. The USSR has subscribed to these norms⁷ and applied them in its dealings with emergent nations. The USA by contrast has objected to Soviet aid to these countries on the alleged grounds of the evils of communism (cheating, lying, totalitarianism), the superiority of the American way of life, the Soviet military threat, former Secretary of State Haig's association of Soviet "international terrorism" with "so-called national liberation,"⁸ etc. What this objection amounts to is that the US ruling group wants exclusive or hegemonic economic power of exploitation over the developing peoples and resources of the world, with unchallenged police power to protect its super-profitable investments. It will tolerate neither the independence of these peoples nor the aid rendered to them by the USSR. It arrogates to itself the authority (over the business community in the US and allied nations) to make normal relations of diplomacy, trade, and arms negotiations with the USSR contingent on Soviet actions toward the developing nations and indeed on any set circumstances it chooses.

On April 19, 1981 Alexander Haig put the matter succinctly: " 'Linkage' is the basic concept of this Administration, and this means that talks, their course, volume, and level will depend on the Soviet Union's behavior on the international scene in the broadest sense of the word." That is, the US with its CIA, money, arms, and economic power in the world, is to have full rights to assassinate foreign leaders, overthrow legally elected governments, combat national liberation revolutionary movements, bolster the most brutal regimes on earth, and even threaten nuclear war — while the Soviet Union is to have no

hand whatsoever in helping the people of the world to achieve their own dignity and freedom from grinding poverty and political strangulation. The truth is that capitalism is an enemy of national liberation and development, and socialism is a friend. To cover up its crimes committed in the name of "freedom" and to falsify the USSR's upholding of the reality of freedom, the US government, in concert with the media, spreads lies, deceptions, misinformation, exaggerations, and gross omissions of the truth. Such tactics are not only hypocritical, but also provocative, especially when President Reagan self-righteously lectures the Soviet Union in international fora and calls for a "crusade for freedom" against the USSR.

The doctrine of linkage of course is not new; only the form of the arrogance is new. In 1918 the US and other Allies intervened in the USSR to force it to do its bidding — without success. Then embargo, ostracism, subversion, and a certain ambivalence toward the Nazis were tried. After World War II, all the powers of an imperialism armed with atomic bombs and atomic blackmail were brought to bear on Soviet communism. Even during the period of detente in the 1970s, the US invoked the doctrine of linkage to try to block Soviet aid to liberation struggles and developing nations such as Angola and Ethiopia. But the proletarian internationalism of the USSR has stood firm; and the objective fact is that more nations are breaking away from the rule of imperialism. They are moving in the direction of self-determination, the abolition of feudalism, the shift of industry to the public sector, nationalization of foreign-owned firms, state control of natural resources, and the training of local personnel.⁹ These nations are not socialist, but with their sense of national identity they have broken away from the sway of foreign nations and are finding their own way to democratic decisions about the form and destiny of the societies. The USSR is ready and willing to aid them in that process. Of course such aid is in the interest of the USSR — because all help to democracy, development, and good-neighborly relations among nations is a help to their own cause. US capitalism has its own self-interest too, but that cannot tolerate the interest of the developing country in independence and development.

The development process, however, is threatened by the arms race and the possibility of nuclear war and annihilation. Hence the question of peace — halting and reversing the arms race and establishing peaceful coexistence — is inseparably linked with the question of national liberation and developing countries. How?

1) In an atmosphere of relaxation of tensions and mutual respect among nations, when militarism and reaction are reduced in power, it is to that extent easier for working people and oppressed peoples generally to assert their democratic rights. The arms race heightens fear and tensions and strengthens the hands of militarists and repressors in the name of national security.

2) The arms race takes a great toll in wealth, wasting the people's resources

that might under peaceful conditions be used for their economic and social development. African countries now spend on military needs an amount fifty per cent greater than that spent on education.¹⁰

3) The arms race increases the possibility of war not only among the big nuclear powers but also among the poorer nations who, driven into deeper poverty and insecurity, are apt to turn to arms as a way out. This point has been stressed by Premier Fidel Castro in his October 12, 1979 speech to the UN on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

4) Detente and peaceful coexistence bring trade between countries of opposed social systems, cultural and scientific exchange, travel, and greater communication between systems. The result is a more open and friendly atmosphere, more curiosity and eagerness to learn from one another; and in the process, the ideas and principles of national liberation struggles and of socialism get a fuller and fairer hearing, more sympathy, and greater moral and material support. Such conditions make it easier for wealthier socialist nations to give aid to new and developing nations and to strengthen cooperative ties.

5) Peaceful coexistence contains and limits the dangers of nuclear war and preserves the very life of peoples and societies without which "development" and "progress" would be meaningless.

The USSR has long recognized the interconnection between peace and development. In the nuclear age, everything — socialism, development, capitalism — depends on reducing and in time eradicating the danger of nuclear war and annihilation. The *coexistence* of all nations, of whatever economic-social system, becomes vital: let them exist, as equals, with mutual respect, and develop in their own ways, independent and self-determining, competing equally; let the people of each nation decide what it shall be and do, within the bounds of acknowledging the equal rights of other nations to exist and develop; let disputes be settled by negotiation and not force; let each nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity be accepted, and let each nation refrain from violating these essential rights, never interfering in the internal affairs of the others. Such was the policy first laid down by Lenin for the USSR's international relations; it has been followed ever since, and has been confirmed in the US-USSR agreements of 1972 and 1973 and the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (at Helsinki, in 1975).

Recognizing the dangers of the arms race and the necessity of peaceful coexistence as the only way to reduce the danger, the USSR has taken more than one hundred initiatives for disarmament. They stretch from the proposal at the Genoa Conference of 1922 for economic cooperation between nations of different systems and Litvinov's concrete program for general and complete disarmament before the League of Nations in 1928 — through the persistent anti-fascist united front policy of the 1930s, plus the plea for collective security, and then all proposals after World War II on the control of atomic energy and

atomic weapons — to recent proposals for a treaty on no first-use of nuclear weapons (1976, 1979, 1980). In his statement before the Special Session on Disarmament II of the General Assembly of the UN on June 16, 1982, President Brezhnev committed the USSR never to be the first to use nuclear weapons, expressing the hope that other nuclear powers would make the same commitment and thus move toward "a ban on the use of nuclear weapons altogether." These proposals have paralleled and complemented the Soviet position in support of national independence. Genuine peace among nations requires mutual respect for the rights of independence, self-determination, equality, and development. These rights in turn require peaceful and not armed methods in the relations between nations. The term "peaceful coexistence" brings together both the concept of peace and that of independence for all nations.

At this moment in history, the peoples and nations of the world find themselves in a crisis that if not rightly resolved will result in the end of history. We have reason to be optimistic that they can and will resolve it. The reason is that the peace movement of the peoples is powerful, wide, and deep and as an objective force is pushing national governments — socialist, capitalist, and non-aligned — to negotiate the disarmament and peace demanded by that movement. (In the USA the people's peace movement ousted two presidents and helped to end the aggression against Vietnam; and it brought out one million people at the June 12, 1982 rally against nuclear weapons.) Encouraged and inspired by this fact, we must press still more resolutely onward, especially those of us in the USA and other large capitalist nations, to move our governments away from the brink and the button. We must work our collective will, all peoples of the world, to save all nations — to create a world of peace and democracy, of friendship and happiness for humanity now and ever after. □

Notes

1. V. I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," *Collected Works*, vol. XX. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964, p. 396.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 451.

3. V. I. Lenin, "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up," *Collected Works*, vol. XXII, p. 339.

4. "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," p. 454.

5. Here most of the data on USSR aid to developing countries comes from "Effective and Mutually Advantageous," *World Marxist Review*, vol. 22, no. 7 (July, 1979), pp. 70-72.

6. Frances Moore Lappé, Joseph Collins, and David Kinley, *Aid as Obstacle. Twenty Questions about our Foreign Aid and the Hungry*. San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1980.

7. For a fuller formulation see Leonid Brezhnev in the Soviet-Libyan talks, April, 1981, as reported in *Pravda*, April 28, 1981.

8. The CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the State Department said they could not document Haig's charges of Soviet terrorism. *The New York Times*, February 9, 1981.

9. V. S. Semyonov, *Nations and Internationalism*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979, p. 276.

10. Victor Saprykov, *Peaceful Coexistence*. Moscow: Novosti Press Agency, 1979, p. 43.

PYOTR FEDOSEYEV

The USSR: A New Social And International Community

For centuries mankind suffered from social inequality and enslavement, from national and class oppression. The split of society into exploiter and exploited classes was supplemented by its division into dominant and oppressed nations and races and had national and racial discrimination as its concomitants. The Great October Socialist Revolution broke the fetters of social and national oppression on one sixth of the Earth's surface, elevated all peoples of our country to independent history-making and paved for them the road to genuine equality and fraternity.

The birth of the USSR — an integral multinational state — created favorable conditions for the development and strengthening of cooperation and friendship among the working people of all nations and nationalities of our country. The CPSU Central Committee resolution on the 60th anniversary of the Soviet Union's formation stated: "The idea of Soviet organization proved appealing to the toiling masses of all peoples of Russia. It was simple and could be adapted to the most diverse conditions of their life."

Implementing Lenin's principles of proletarian internationalism, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union established an unbreakable union of all nations and nationalities of the country. A new, great social and international community of working people — the Soviet people — has taken shape in the course of their joint effort to transform Soviet society along socialist and communist lines and to defend the gains of the revolution.

Basic Features of Soviet Society

The birth of a new historical community was conditioned by a profound change in both the material and moral aspects of the country's life, a change which had initially resulted from the building of socialist foundations and was deepened subsequently by the development of a mature socialist society. The following basic features of Soviet reality deserve special mention: the assertion of the public ownership of the means of production throughout the country; the

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merging of the economic complex and the evening out of their economic development levels; the conversion of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry into the firm political and ideological unity of these classes with the people's intelligentsia; the development of integral international culture on the basis of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the best traditions of all Soviet national cultures; the elevation of social consciousness to a high level of maturity and the attainment of tangible results in the field of communist education, in developing an active attitude to life in the Soviet people.

This new historical community is not only an unbreakable alliance of the working class, the collective farm peasantry and the people's intelligentsia. It also represents international unity of all socialist nations and nationalities, and embodies the common, Soviet features of everything which they have attained while building socialism and communism.

Maturity of national relations is being more and more fully manifest at the stage of developed socialism in the USSR. Cooperation among all nations and nationalities of the country is steadily growing stronger as the social homogeneity of society is consolidating. The 26th Congress of the CPSU emphasized that the fraternal friendship among the Soviet peoples had become stronger.

In this country internationalism is being asserted in everyday life and in the creative endeavor of the Soviet people. People of different nationalities live as brothers and are working jointly in all regions and districts, in all republics, at all businesses and on collective farms, in offices and institutes. This is helping them to score ever new successes in the construction of communism.

However, it would be wrong to believe that the Soviet people have acquired some specific ethnic characteristics as a new historical community, or that its formation means the emergence of a new nation. The development and consolidation of this community by no means leads to the disappearance of the existing nations and nationalities. Our Party has given a precise scientific interpretation of this question, having established that the Soviet people, in terms of a new historical community, represent a social and international entity, rather than an ethnic or specific national one.

In his report on the draft Constitution of the USSR Leonid Brezhnev criticized attempts to introduce the notion of an "integral Soviet nation." He said: "The Soviet people's social and political unity does not at all imply the disappearance of national distinctions." This new historical community not only does not abolish the existing nations and does not create some structures above them. It exemplifies the unity of people belonging to different nationalities in conditions when these nations and nationalities are preserved, as well as their unique national characteristics, languages and cultures. Moreover, as a new historical community, the Soviet people are setting an example of how the material and spiritual potential of each nation and nationality can be

organically and effectively developed and enriched.

In this context it is important to recall Lenin's idea to the effect that the notion "international" does not imply the lack of national features. An international community is inconceivable without national components, without nations and nationalities which are forming it.

The flowering of nations and their drawing closer together are parallel and interrelated, rather than isolated, processes. The conditions and means for national development and rapprochement are being created simultaneously through a reciprocal effort. This is true of material, social and spiritual prerequisites pertaining to the formation, functioning and consolidation of a new social and international community.

These are primarily the processes of building the material and technical basis of communism, and improving the integral national economic complex which represents a material foundation of the friendship of the Soviet peoples. The task of evening out the Soviet republics' economic development levels has been solved in the main at the stage of mature socialism. Each republican economy occupies an important place in the national division of labor and contributes more and more tangibly to increasing the country's wealth. Under mature socialism the role of all nations in tackling tasks of importance to the whole country is growing, and the interests of each of them are being more and more closely interlinked with the interests of the Soviet people as a whole. The dynamic development of our economy, and the implementation of such huge economic programs as the tapping of fuel, energy and raw material resources of Siberia and the Far East, the construction of the Baikal-Amur Railway, the transformation of the Russian Federation's non-black soil zone, and the building of the Angara-Yenisei complex, are unthinkable without the collective effort of the working people in all republics, and without the mobilization of their material and manpower potential. The course of our Party is aimed towards further building up the material and spiritual potential of each republic, as well as towards using it to the utmost for the harmonious development of the entire country. The Party regards this as a necessary and important condition for ensuring the advance of Soviet society, strengthening the economic and defence might of the USSR, and improving the prosperity of the working people.

Socialist internationalization of production is also being enhanced by the scientific and technical revolution which objectively demands that all nations and nationalities intensify their cooperation in the economy and scientific research. Under its impact, the material foundations of life of the Soviet peoples are growing stronger, while specialization and concentration of production are being deepened. New industries are making rapid progress in the constituent republics, and the cultural, technical and professional standards of the working people of all nations are being raised in the process.

It goes without saying that the process of internationalization in all spheres of

our life demands continued improvements in the methods of scientific direction of social development. This above all applies to developing the entire centralized planning in combination with broad initiatives of union and autonomous republics, raising the creative activities of the masses, elevating the level of their consciousness and cultural standards, and resolutely combatting all manifestations of parochialism and excessive departmental zeal.

Evening Up Development Levels

Close interrelation between the improvement of the social structure and the consolidation of the international unity of nations and nationalities has always been typical of socialist society. But perhaps it is precisely in our time, at the current stage of communist construction that the interweaving of trends and regularities determining the direction of development of individual republics, nations and nationalities, on the one hand, and characterizing the progress of society as a whole, on the other, is manifest with particular force. Thus, the advance of Soviet society at the state of mature socialism towards greater social homogeneity is a general regularity. At the same time this trend governs the development of each Soviet nation and nationality taken separately. Establishment of classless society will be a milestone in the process of the nations' progressive rapprochement on a truly democratic and genuinely international basis. The 26th CPSU Congress concluded that it is possible to form a classless society in the main within the historical framework of mature socialism. In each and every republic the socialist classes and social groups are drawing closer together both in terms of their relation to the means of production, and the character of their labor, the size and forms of payment for it, as well as cultural and technical standards and conditions of everyday life. The most striking manifestations of all this are the leveling out of the social structure in all constituent and autonomous republics, and the growing proportion of the working class. Significantly, the proportion of indigenous workers in the working class of the republics is rising constantly. This is connected, in part, with the further growth of industrial enterprises and state farms. The considerable increase in the number of qualified personnel in all the republics is also a remarkable trend. Each republic now has plenty of its own engineers, technicians, researchers, artists, teachers and doctors, whose number keeps growing. The social make-up of the peasantry and the conditions of rural life have undergone a qualitative change on the basis of the development of production at collective and state farms, inter-farm cooperation and agro-industrial integration.

The seventies saw the implementation of a social program on a scale unprecedented in the entire history of the country. As a result of this, the well-being of the working people has been raised, the conditions of their work and rest

improved, and new steps taken in the development of housing construction and the perfection of the system of social security, public health and communal services in all union and autonomous republics. In a word, the living conditions of the working people in the union and autonomous republics have been evened out to a substantial extent, although certain differences inherited from the past are not yet eliminated. The task of leveling out social distinctions on the territorial plane has been raised by the 26th CPSU Congress as a serious question of further consolidating not only the social and class, but also the international, cohesion of Soviet society.

Speaking about qualitative characteristics of a new social and international community, it is also important to note that, regardless of their nationality, all Soviet people are united by their common world outlook and one and the same moral and cultural values. It is socialism that for the first time in the history of civilization has fully wiped out illiteracy, and made the treasury of the world's and national cultures accessible to every working person. The integral international culture of the people which has taken shape in the USSR is absorbing the best cultural achievements and values of each Soviet nation and nationality. In its turn, the flowering of national cultures is only possible on the basis of their rapprochement and mutual enrichment. The contribution of each nation and nationality to their common Soviet culture is invariably rising with the development of their socialist national cultures.

The spread of the Russian language, which consolidates the relations of friendship and fraternity among all Soviet peoples, helps to strengthen the new historical community. It is essential to stress again in this context the fallacy of assertions which are sometimes made that the Russian language is supposedly an ethnic indication of the emerging integral Soviet nation. In real fact, the Russian language, as the language of the numerically strongest nation, served as a means of economic and cultural communication among different peoples of this country even in prerevolutionary times. Now that there exists a mature socialist society, an integral national economic complex, and very close economic, scientific, technical and cultural links in this country, different nations and nationalities have come to use Russian to communicate with one another by virtue of the requirements of everyday life.

In today's conditions, under which national, local and group peculiarities, traditions and forms of social life are being preserved, a way of life common for the entire Soviet people has established itself. It determines the more important features of life in this country and is consolidating the international community of all Soviet peoples.

Dialectics of the National and International

The Soviet people are not just an ordinary sum of nations living side by side in one and the same state, under one roof, so to speak. Irrespective of their

nationality, all our compatriots have many common features which unite them into an integral whole. Importantly, internationalism as an attitude to social reality and a norm of behavior of Soviet citizens is being expressed by them always in the context of their national background. All common features typical of the Soviet people as a whole are reflected in the specific peculiarities and modes of life of different nations and nationalities.

Such processes as the progressive drawing closer together of all Soviet peoples, the development of their cooperation and the consolidation of their fraternal friendship, are growing in intensity in a mature socialist society. In its turn, this leads to continued flowering of the socialist nations, helps to reveal more fully their creative potential and creates the necessary environment for the development of their national features. Such is the dialectics of national relations at the stage of mature socialism.

While creating conditions for an increasingly closer rapprochement of all nations and nationalities of our country, the CPSU organically combines their interests with those of the Soviet people as a whole, and always takes national peculiarities into account in its policy. The Communist Party resolutely opposes attempts to erase these peculiarities artificially, and at the same time considers their artificial exaggeration impermissible.

Loyal to Lenin's behests, the CPSU is developing in the Soviet people respect for national feelings and national dignity of every man. The Party vigorously combats any manifestations of phenomena alien to socialism, such as chauvinism or nationalism, any nationalistic quirks, national narrow-mindedness and isolation, national egotism and conceit, and also the attempts to perpetuate backward forms of everyday life and historically obsolete customs and traditions.

Speaking at a festive meeting in Tashkent, devoted to the presentation of the Order of Lenin to the Uzbek SSR, comrade Leonid Brezhnev pointed out that in the context of our multiethnic country internationalism today, is, above all, an honest, faithful and fully effective labor effort by all peoples of this country for the common good; it is an ability to put the interests of the whole country ahead of departmental or local interests, and to ensure the smooth operation of the integral national economic setup; it is a timely and effective fulfillment of all inter-republican delivery programs, the utmost utilization of resources, and active involvement in resolving problems crucial to the advance of the economy and well-being of the entire nation.

Implementing the Party's domestic and foreign policies, the Soviet people are fully resolved to score new labor successes for the benefit of their homeland and in the name of strengthening peace all over the world. □

Part Two

Development of the USSR As a Multinational State

JOHN PITTMAN

Sixty Years of the Soviet Multinational State

On December 30, 1922, a historically new type of state came into existence. It was the first time ever that a state's structural principle was consciously adopted to end national and racial oppression and to achieve the planned factual equality of races, nations and nationalities. Altogether unprecedented was the use of this state's power to draw heretofore oppressed and deprived races and nationalities into the process of forming their own states and joining as equals in building a new civilization.

Such was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

The USSR entered the world as the legitimate descendant of generations upon generations of peoples' struggles for freedom. It was the immediate offspring of the October Socialist Revolution, the third Russian revolution within 12 years of the first two decades of the twentieth century, and the first victory of the world socialist revolution.

In a country which had become in those two decades the hub of the world working class revolutionary movement, the USSR took shape as the biggest state of its time, occupying one-sixth of the world's land mass. It arose phoenix-like from the carnage and chaos of the First World War, and amidst the devastation of a civil war cruelly protracted by the intervention of 14 capitalist states.

The Soviet census of August 1920 recorded one consequence attributable in part to those wars, imperialist invasions and annexations, and the resultant famine, disease and social disruption. The reported population of 136.8 million in that year represented a decline of 22.4 million from the 159.2 million recorded in the last prewar year, 1913.¹ (Significantly for the USSR's declared aim of creating a union of free, equal nations and races, a later census in 1926 noted that 57 per cent of the population belonged to at least 194 non-Russian nations, nationalities and ethnographic groups.)²

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The founding and establishment of a socialist, multinational, new type of state in old Russia amidst those conditions at that historical moment was an unprecedented achievement of enormous magnitude and lasting significance for all humankind. Some 70 years previously, Karl Marx had written: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living."³ As a characterization of the processes that culminated in the formation of the USSR, Marx's observation was singularly apt.

The revolutionary movement in old Russia developed through sacrificial and bloody struggles against precisely such obstacles left over from dead generations. At the pinnacle of these was an absolutist monarchy buttressed by remnants of medieval semi-serf institutions, estates, and an enormous parasitical bureaucracy. With this gigantic apparatus for suppressing and exploiting the working masses, the autocracy administered the state as a prison of peoples. Institutions constituting privileges arbitrarily conceived and forcibly imposed decades and even centuries before perpetuated national and racial inequality and oppression, and continuously generated animosity and strife.

Some Facts of National and Racial Oppression

As intolerable as was the lot of the Great-Russian workers and peasants, that of the non-Russian peoples was indescribably worse. Although constituting the majority of the population they were denied all rights. They suffered innumerable persecutions, humiliations and insults. Their national cultures were savagely persecuted. Many peoples were forbidden to teach their children their native language, or to publish newspapers and books in their language. In the East the population was totally illiterate.

The entire tsarist state and bureaucracy, with its enormous army of police, jailers, tax-collectors and other petty officials robbed and tortured the non-Russian peoples. The autocracy officially branded the non-Russians as "aliens" of allegedly "inferior races," and fomented antagonism and discord among them, inciting one people against another, whipping up anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish pogroms, provoking Armenians and Azerbaidzhanians to massacre each other.

The last tsar, Nicholas II, was notoriously cruel, and this trait was particularly noticeable in his policies toward the non-Russian peoples. From the time of his ascension to the throne, he schemed to nullify the democratic and autonomous constitution of Finland, won in 1809 as the condition of its union with Russia. His officials and the Russian Orthodox Church worked together to impose forced conversion on the peoples of Central Asia. Nicholas himself

enrolled publicly in the anti-Semitic pogromist Black Hundreds and wore their badge at state occasions.

From 1863 to 1916 the subject peoples suffered unendurable oppression, and that period is one of constantly expanding uprisings which the autocracy suppressed with savage ferocity. The great Polish insurrection of 1863 was crushed with 30,000 killed in battle and 1,500 executed. In 1916 the Kirghiz, Kazakh and Turkmen peoples rebelled, and many thousands were massacred, flogged or sent to convict labor. Rebellion flared in the Caucasus in the 1860s and 1870s. During the 1905 revolution, workers and peasants in Poland, Georgia and the Baltic provinces rose in revolt, subsequently to bear the brunt of the brutal reaction.

This ruthless oppression of the non-Russian masses, perpetrated and intensified by the survival and power of outmoded institutions, slowed and deformed the development of capitalism. These factors retarded the growth of productive forces and the expansion of the home market. Analyzing capitalist development in Russia, mainly in the "post-Reform period," that is, after the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, Lenin wrote in 1899 that "the present rate of development in Russia is really slow. Nor could it be anything else but slow, for there is not a single capitalist country in the world in which ancient institutions, which are incompatible with capitalism, which retard its development, which immeasurably worsen the conditions of the producers who 'suffer from capitalism as well as from the insufficient development of capitalism,' have survived in such abundance as they have survived in Russia."⁴

The backwardness imposed on Russia by capitalism's slow development was manifested particularly in regard to the national question. Unlike capitalism's development in continental Western Europe, where violent bourgeois-democratic revolutions during the period of 1789 to 1871 broke down the absolutist-feudal barriers to the new system of production relations, capitalism in old Russia developed in collusion with and under the protection of the autocracy. The process of awakening national movements which capitalism in its developing state engenders, drawing millions of people into mass struggles to clear feudal barriers to the formation of national states and bringing the national question to the fore, ended in continental Western Europe decades before it began in the tsarist empire at the turn of the century. More than two and one-half centuries were to pass after the English revolution of 1642, nearly one and one-half centuries after the American revolution of 1775, before the first bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905-1907 in Russia.

In consequence of this uneven historical development, the tasks of formulating and elaborating principles for erecting the political-legal superstructure of a socialist society and the principles for resolving the national question emerged concurrently in the socialist revolutionary movement of Russia. Beginning in 1870 when Russian exiles living in Geneva formed the Russian section of the

International Working Men's Association (First International), the followers of Marx and Engels began to address these tasks. The organization of Marxist study groups and circles during the 1880s and 1890s spread the teachings of Marx and Engels among the workers. On March 13, 1898, the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) was founded in Minsk. Significantly, at its birth the founders of this antecedent of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union named it the *Rossiiskaya* party, thereby designating it as a party of both Russian and non-Russian peoples, rather than *Russkaya*, a party of the Russians, the dominant and oppressor national among the peoples. This measure emphasized the emancipatory content of its avowed aim of uniting the foremost workers of all the peoples of tsarist Russia for the abolition of the autocracy.

Oppressed and Oppressor Nations

The 19th Century gave way to the 20th amidst tumult and turmoil. In its imperialist stage capitalism increased the oppression and exploitation of working people, particularly the people of non-Russian nations and nationalities. Imperialism also engendered expansionist and annexationist tendencies which produced conquests of weaker peoples and a grab for colonies. Wars between rival imperialist states began over division of the plunder, viz., the Spanish-American War of 1898, the Boer War of 1899-1902, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Tsarist Russia also embarked on annexationist designs against China and Persia.

Imperialism created a political configuration of the world in which a handful of imperialist powers subjected and oppressed other nations, bringing to the fore the fundamental principle of internationalism and socialism, namely, that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations. This fact gave special meaning to the struggle for the right of nations to self-determination. Without such a struggle it would not be possible to overcome the most difficult and most important task of uniting the class struggle of the workers of the oppressor nation with that of the workers of the oppressed nations. However, with the help of the genius and leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin), Marxism's most brilliant exponent and continuator, the working classes of Russians and non-Russians proved able to accomplish that task.

When the Second Congress of the RSDLP (July 17-August 10, 1903) began, Lenin had become the acknowledged leader of the Party's militant majority (the Bolsheviks). After bitter struggles with opponents of principles which Lenin and his followers proposed, the Bolsheviks succeeded in defeating the minority (the Mensheviks) over the adoption of a revolutionary program.

The Congress decided to build the RSDLP as a disciplined, fighting organization of the working class in alliance with the peasantry, based on principles of proletarian internationalism. Lenin won adoption in the program of clauses

designating the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat as the fundamental task of the party of the working class, and for the right of nations to self-determination as an integral prerequisite of the victory of that struggle. Thus, as early as 1903, the Bolsheviks had settled on the basic content of the state they would form and policies they would pursue for solving the national question. However, from that time until they had wrested political power from the bourgeois-landlord rulers after the October Revolution in 1917, they continued to enrich their views about the state and the task of abolishing national oppression and inequality. They sought applicable answers in the works of Marx and Engels, and in the revolutionary experience of the working class movements in Western Europe in general, and in tsarist Russia in particular. The examples and principles which most influenced them indicate the paramount considerations motivating their selection.

Primacy of Uniting Advanced Workers

The first and supreme overall consideration was the indispensable and mandatory necessity of uniting the most advanced workers, regardless of nationality, race, sex or religion, for capturing state power and abolishing the autocracy and its institutions. This would make way for the proletarian struggle against capitalism and the replacement of a bourgeois regime by proletarian rule.

This task was primary and superior to all other tasks, since its accomplishment alone could protect the interests of the workers and the democratic solutions achieved by the revolution of other questions which the bourgeois democratic revolution proved unable to solve, including the national question.

Lenin fought consistently and uncompromisingly for the primacy of this premise. Working class unity, regardless of differences of nationality, race, sex or religion, was the basic prerequisite of the capture of state power by the working class and its allies. In polemics against proponents of cultural-national autonomy, Lenin showed that so-called "national culture," in contrast to the workers' democratic international culture, is bourgeois national culture, the culture of the exploiters and the ruling class. To make this the yardstick for the separation and division of nationalities would deliver the workers of each nationality to the ideological and political domination of the ruling class of their nationality.

Further, such separation and division itself would obstruct the unification of the workers, irrespective of nationality, thereby retarding their united struggle against national oppression and inequality. Lenin wrote that "the national cause comes first and the proletarian cause second, the bourgeois nationalists say . . . The proletarian cause must come first, we say, because it not only protects the lasting and fundamental interests of labor and of humanity, but also those of democracy. . . ."⁵

The second basic premise underlying the determination of principles for forming the proletarian state and solving the national question was the need for complete, consistent and genuine democratization. Lenin considered this obligatory not only for effecting the transition from capitalism to socialism, and for building socialism and communism, but also for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

The proletariat cannot be victorious except through democracy, i.e., by giving full effect to democracy and by linking with each step of its struggle democratic demands formulated in the most resolute terms.⁶

It was axiomatic among all followers of Marx and Engels that a proletarian state would represent the interests of the expropriated, the majority of the population, against the interests of the expropriators, the minority. The *Communist Manifesto* stated the point: "... all previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of minorities ... the proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority."⁷ Hence, it would involve masses of the population not only in the creation and establishment of the proletarian state, but also in the tasks of administering the affairs of society. Such a state would be a higher type of democracy than previously existed.

Lenin emphasized this point in one of his earliest writings. He wrote that "The proletariat alone can be the *vanguard fighter* for political liberty and for democratic institutions. Firstly, this is because political tyranny bears most heavily upon the proletariat . . ." Such were the theoretical foundations on which Lenin and the Bolsheviks developed the Party's program for establishing a new type of political power and abolishing national and racial oppression and inequality: working class unification regardless of national, racial, sex or religious differences, and consistent, complete revolutionary democracy. Elaboration of the program, drawing upon experiences of the international and Russian revolutionary working class movements, proceeded on the basis of these premises.

Two Exemplary Antecedents

In *The Civil War in France*, Marx characterized the 72-day Paris Commune of March-May, 1871 as "essentially a working-class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form . . . at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labor."⁹ Further, said Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, during the period of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist to communist society, "the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."¹⁰ (Emphasis in original.)

Significantly, the Commune was multinational in composition, reflecting the

internationalist level reached by the proletariat in the classic country of the class struggle at that stage of the working class movement.

A second impressive revolutionary experience directly related to questions of state formation and development. It appeared during the first Russian revolution, the revolution of 1905-07 against tsarist class and national oppression. It was the first people's revolution in the period of imperialism, the awakening of millions upon millions of people to political consciousness and revolutionary struggle.

Emerging amidst the fire of battle, as Lenin described it, "a peculiar mass organization was formed, the famous Soviets of Workers' Deputies, comprising delegates from all factories." He took note of several features of this original creation of the Russian working class. "In several cities," he wrote, "these Soviets of Workers' Deputies began more and more to play the part of a provisional revolutionary government, the part of organs and leaders of the uprisings . . . For a time several cities in Russia became something in the nature of small local 'republics'. The government authorities were deposed and the Soviets of Workers' Deputies actually functioned as the new government."¹¹

Another demonstration of this form of workers' power occurred during the bourgeois-democratic Russian revolution of February 1917, which abolished the tsarist monarchical regime. From the beginning of the armed insurrection on February 26 to the formation on March 2 of the bourgeois-landowner Provisional Government, Soviets spread rapidly over the country and acted alone to transform the social, political and cultural life. They set up workers' control over production, helped to establish trade unions and factory committees, reinstituted democratic institutions, created a workers' militia, facilitated the supply of food and provided bread for the working people. Such achievements in so little time could not fail to impress the Bolsheviks, and Lenin saw them as embodying the form by which the majority of the population could be brought into active participation in administering the state.

Moreover, this experience convinced the Bolsheviks that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionary deputies to the Soviets, who formed the majority at that time, could not be relied on to carry out revolutionary proletarian tasks. Their collaboration with the bourgeoisie and landlords of the Provisional Government threatened the gains of the revolutionary forces.

Upsurge of National Liberation Movement

From a third revolutionary experience Lenin and the Bolsheviks concluded that a federative republic was a suitable form for implementing the Party's program for ending national oppression and inequality. This conclusion was the culmination of long deliberation. At first Lenin and the Bolsheviks rejected federalism, arguing that the large centralized state was more suitable for

defending the gains of the revolution and for marshalling the resources of the country during the transition to socialism.

The change favoring federalism resulted from a number of influences, the most important of which was the rapid upsurge of the national liberation movement. Earlier, Lenin had taken stock of the thinking of Marx. In 1915 he wrote: "Never in favor of petty states, or the splitting up of states in general, or the principle of federation, Marx considered the separation of an oppressed nation to be a step towards federation, and consequently, not towards a split, but towards concentration, both political and economic, but concentration on the basis of democracy."¹²

With the growth of the national liberation movement among the oppressed nations and nationalities, demands for exercising the right of self-determination also multiplied. Occurring in conjunction with the growing maturity of conditions and resultant urgency of the socialist revolution, the changing situation placed the need for federation on the order of the day.

The right of nations to self-determination was the underlying principle on which Lenin and the Bolsheviks developed their solution of the national question. Its implementation required the adoption of federation as the structural principle of the proletarian state. At the April 1917 All-Russia Conference of the Bolsheviks, Lenin emphasized that only recognition of the right of all nations freely to secede and to form independent states would ensure solidarity of the workers of the various nations concerned. His resolution distinguished the right to secession from its expediency and advisability. It was like the right to divorce, which did not make separation mandatory. Whether or not a nation seceded would depend on the decision of the Party in each particular case, as well as on the interests of the proletariat's struggle for socialism.

The right of nations to self-determination, Lenin said, was the most basic of the democratic measures against national oppression and inequality. There could not be greater freedom than the freedom to secede, the freedom to form an independent national state. For that reason he emphasized that no compulsion or coercion whatever was permissible in the implementation of this right. His "Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Program" on May 20, 1917 called for Section 9 to be amended to read: "The right of all member nations of the state freely to secede and form independent states. The Republic of the Russian nation must attract other nations or nationalities not by force, but exclusively by voluntary agreement on the question of forming a common state. The unity and fraternal alliance of the workers of all countries are incompatible with the use of force, direct or indirect, against other nationalities."¹³

Soon after there began the events which culminated in the October Socialist Revolution, inaugurating the revolutionary renovation of the world. On October 25 (November 7) 1917 the uprisings of workers, peasants and soldiers achieved victory of the Revolution. The following day, on October 26, the

Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets accepted state power from the Revolutionary Military Committee. This signified that Soviets, the organs of power created by the revolutionary masses of Russia, would form the political foundation of the new state of proletarian rule.

First Decrees Liberate Oppressed

Immediately on taking power the Congress adopted measures of far-reaching importance for progress in implementing Lenin's principles for a democratic solution of the national question. The *Decree on Peace* of October 26 declared the new state's intention of immediately concluding a peace without annexations or indemnities. The very wording of this first decree of the workers' state signalled to all peoples of the world that a new power had emerged on the side of the oppressed and weak nations and the rights of all nationalities to peace and freedom.

On October 27 the *Decree on Land* crucially affected the interests of the mainly peasant populations of the oppressed nations and nationalities. It confiscated all the landlords' land without compensation and transferred all the land to the ownership of the state; more than 360 million acres passed to the people.

Before ending its session the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets announced a complete break with the policies of national oppression. It guaranteed the right of self-determination to all nations inhabiting Russia, and established a Commissariat of Nationalities, headed by Stalin. On November 2 (15), 1917 the Council of People's Commissars, the government of the Soviet state, issued the *Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia*. The Declaration proclaimed the equality of the peoples of Russia, their right to free self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of independent states, the abolition of all national and national-religious disabilities and privileges, and the free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups.

In an *Appeal to All Moslem Laborers of Russia and the East*, the Soviet government on November 20, 1917 announced that henceforth the beliefs and customs and the national and cultural institutions of these peoples were free and inviolable. It declared the Soviet state had torn up the secret treaties of tsarist government and the Provisional Government which had legitimized the seizure of Constantinople and the partition of Turkey and Persia.

Events signifying steps toward liberation of non-Russian subject nations and nationalities rapidly multiplied. The Russian protectorates of the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva became autonomous entities, free of all obligations imposed by the tsarist regime. The state independence of Finland and the right of self-determination of the peoples of "Turkish Armenia" were recognized. The right of Poland to self-determination and an independent existence was recognized for the first time.

Working people of the non-Russian nationalities overcame their national bourgeoisie and landowners and installed Soviet power. This happened in October 1917 in Byelorussia, and shortly afterward in Estonia and Latvia. From November 1917 through January 1918 workers and peasants established Soviet power in eastern Moldavia, in the Crimea and the North Caucasus. Three months after the October Revolution, Soviet power had been established throughout the country, and moreover, mainly by peaceful means. Armed conflict occurred in only 15 of 85 provincial capitals and other major cities.¹⁴

In session January 10-18, 1918 the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies adopted the *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People*. This Declaration announced the formation of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and proclaimed the basic principles of the nationalities policy of the Soviet state. It recorded that "the Soviet Russian Republic is founded on the basis of the free union of nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics."

Basic principles of Soviet federation were established in accordance with forms of Soviet national statehood and how they were to be independent and autonomous republics, autonomous national regions and national areas, and two transitional forms: the People's Soviet republics, and Communes. These forms corresponded to legal categories of nations, nationalities, tribes and ethnic, ethnographic and national groups, in conformity with the different stages of economic, political and cultural development of the country's multinational, multiracial population.

Federation was to develop along three main lines: first on the basis of autonomy, as occurred, for example, in the USSR with its many autonomous republics and regions, which became a model for other multinational and multiracial union republics; second, along the line of forming independent national republics linked to the RSFSR by federal ties formalized by bilateral treaties of alliance, as exemplified by the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Azerbaidzhanian, Armenian and Georgian Soviet Socialist Republics; third, an intermediate form of federation, such as the relationship between the RSFSR and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic or the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

A Higher Type of Democracy

Among other principles of federation were those designating the All-Russia Congress of Soviets as the supreme authority, which elected the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (ARCEC) and the Council of People's Commissars, the government of the Federation. Drawing on the experience of the Paris Commune, Soviets, as representative bodies of the people, were working, rather than parliamentary bodies, uniting legislative and executive authority. Rejection of the bourgeois democratic parliamentary principle of a division of

powers was reinforced by adoption of other measures of the Commune, namely, the principle that all members of Soviets and other public officials must be elected, responsible to implement mandates of their constituencies, and revocable, or subject to recall.

In July 1918 the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets adopted the Constitution of the RSFSR, which generalized the experience of forming autonomous republics and their federal union with the Russian Federation. Later Constitutions, those of 1924 and 1936, established principles for demarcating jurisdiction between central, regional and local organs of the Federation.

The RSFSR was the prototype of the USSR. Its development within a few months convinced Lenin of the importance of federalism. Preparing his draft for revising the program of the party early in 1919, he designated among tasks of the Party:

to strengthen and further develop the Federative Republic of Soviets as an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy than bourgeois parliamentarism, and as the sole type of state corresponding, on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and equally of the experience of Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917-18, to the transitional period between capitalism and socialism, i.e. to the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat;¹⁵

Lenin's contention that the proletarian democracy embodied in the RSFSR was "an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy" than that of capitalist democracies was fully substantiated by facts, particularly facts in the sphere of national relations.

In 1917 Lenin wrote that the essence of capitalist parliamentarism in the most democratic republics as well as in parliamentary constitutional monarchies, is to decide every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament. In August, 1918 he told American workers that "the Soviets of Workers and Peasants are a new type of state, a new and higher type of democracy, a form of the proletarian dictatorship, a means of administering the state without the bourgeoisie. . . . For the first time democracy is here serving the people, the working people, and has ceased to be democracy for the rich as it still is in all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic."¹⁶

In his polemics with slanderers of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin focused attention on the gulf separating capitalist democracy's promises from its performance, its words from its deeds. He observed that capitalist democracy had always promised equality of its citizens, irrespective of sex, religion, race or nationality. Yet, in not a single one of the most advanced capitalist democratic countries had these promises been fulfilled. He was especially severe in his denunciations of the oppression and super-exploitation of the

hundreds of millions of people among the nationalities and races. in the colonies and semi-colonies of the bourgeois democratic powers.

At the 12th International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart (Germany) in 1907, Lenin branded the opportunists' advocacy of support for the colonial policy of their countries as an attempt to subordinate the working class to imperialism. In 1916 he called attention to the tendency of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists to convert a handful of very rich and privileged nations into "eternal parasites," living on the body of the rest of humankind, on the exploitation of Negroes, Indians and other peoples, and keeping them in subjection with the weapons of extermination provided by modern militarism.¹⁷

"To a certain degree," Lenin wrote, "the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of their own bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations."¹⁸ In many areas of political life the workers of oppressor nations enjoy a privileged position in comparison with the workers of oppressed nations. Further, the workers of the oppressor nations are indoctrinated by the bourgeoisie with contempt and hatred for the workers of the oppressed nations. This undermines and obstructs the struggle for their freedom, since no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations.

During the years of 1918-1921 Soviet multinational, multiracial state development progressed through the extension of federal ties. The RSFSR, Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Soviet Republic concluded treaties with one another. Progress was made despite formidable obstacles. Disregarding the Soviet government's unilateral withdrawal from the war, and rejecting Soviet proposals for peace, the German-Austrian forces advanced on Petrograd and Moscow. To avoid disaster, the Soviet government on March 3, 1918 signed the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, under which vast expanses of territory were torn from the country and Soviet Russia was required to pay enormous reparations.

Before the ink had dried on the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the Entente powers, having conspired to dismember Russia and crush the Soviets, launched aggressions under cover of "protecting" the Soviets from the Germans. The intervention of foreign military forces activated all the counterrevolutionary forces, the long-time foes of the Bolsheviks, the nationalist groups among the subject peoples, the kulaks and bands of former tsarist troops. Incredible deprivation and hardships, resulting from the imperialist blockade, the hoarding and withholding of food by the kulaks, sabotage and general dislocation beset the young state.

Opportunists Desert to Counterrevolution

Amidst these difficulties, Lenin had to contend with opposition to his views on the national question within the Party. This was not a new development.

Lenin's defense and development of Marxist principles regarding the national question, as in the case also of other Marxist tenets derived from the experience of the international working class revolutionary movement, encountered intransigent opposition not only from the tsarist establishment and its bourgeois-democratic successor, but also from many individuals and groups that aspired to lead the masses of Russia. Since their expulsion from the RSDLP at the Prague Conference in January 1912, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries had opposed applying the right of self-determination to the subject peoples of Russia. The Mensheviks supported their fellow opportunists of the Second International in attempts to justify the annexation of colonies and the exploitation of the colonial peoples of Africa and Asia.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries continued to follow the path of opportunism and bourgeois nationalism and racism before and after the February 1917 Revolution, and after the October 1917 Revolution. This path brought them increasingly to collaboration with the tsarist White Guards and bourgeois parties. It led eventually to their defection from every semblance of association with the Communists—the Left Social Revolutionaries fought against the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and even organized an armed revolt in Moscow against the Soviet Republic—and eventually to active participation in the counterrevolutionary and foreign interventionist forces. They thereby left the Communists as the sole party guiding the proletarian state's revolutionary transformation of Russia.

The desertion of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries to the side of the counterrevolution, the Whites and foreign aggressors, was profoundly disappointing to Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Lenin welcomed members of these parties who joined the Communists in defense of the revolution. On November 20, 1918 he wrote that "when profound world-historic changes bring about an inevitable turn in our direction among the mass of non-Party, Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary democrats, we must learn and shall learn to make use of this change of front, to encourage it, to induce it among the various groups and sections of the population, to do everything possible to reach agreement with them and thus facilitate the work of socialist construction and ease the burden of grievous economic dislocation, ignorance and incompetence which are delaying the victory of socialism."¹⁹ "The period of our proletarian revolution in which the differences with the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary democrats were particularly acute was a historically necessary period. It was impossible to avoid waging a vigorous struggle against these democrats when they swung to the camp of our enemies and set about restoring a bourgeois and imperialist democratic republic."²⁰

Measures to Achieve Factual Equality

The Tenth Congress of the RCP(B) in March, 1921, discussing how to

involve all the peoples of the Soviet Republic in building socialism, emphasized the necessity for realizing the factual (*de facto*) as well as the legal (*de jure*) equality of the peoples. It was necessary to eliminate existing inequality, the legacy of decades and even centuries of tsarist oppression, and expressed in economic, political and cultural backwardness. This Congress, on Lenin's urging, was the one which decided on a massive and systematic program of positive activities to eliminate national and racial inequality.

Such activities were to include industrial development in regions inhabited by the former subject peoples, the development of their Soviet statehood, development of culture in their native languages (earlier measures had affirmed the equality and free development of languages and had prohibited the proclamation of Russian as the official state language), and the training of a native workforce and intelligentsia. The Great-Russian working class, in accordance with the principles of proletarian internationalism, was obligated to extend assistance to the predominantly peasant populations of the formerly oppressed peoples. These decisions were to have far-reaching consequences well beyond the borders of the Soviet Republic, establishing principles not only for achieving equality of the nationalities and races of that country, but also showing the way of bringing less developed peoples to socialism while bypassing the capitalist stage of development.

The Tenth Party Congress also adopted a resolution stressing the need for uniting the Soviet republics in a close state union. Efforts to cope with this need had been manifest in the formation of a military-political alliance during the civil war and intervention, in the treaty relations between the RSFSR and the union republics. By mid-1922, a number of objective conditions had increased the urgency of unification. Lenin and the People's Commissariat of Nationalities favored a closer union. The hour was favorable for a structural form of federation which would facilitate the cooperation of all nations, nationalities and races in the defense of the revolution's gains against the capitalist encirclement and the development of the economy in all areas of the country.

However, before this prospect could be realized, Lenin found it necessary to emphasize again the basic principles for achieving a closer unification of the Soviet republics and for realizing the equality in fact of the many nations, nationalities and races at different levels of development. The occasion arose in September 1922 when a Central Committee Commission of the RCP(B), set up to work out proposals for further relations between the RSFSR, the Ukrainian Republic, the Byelorussian Republic and the Transcaucasian Federation, adopted Stalin's draft resolution on such relations. On September 26, Lenin, although seriously ill and unable to participate actively in the Central Committee meetings, criticized Stalin's draft and proposed a totally different solution.

Stalin's draft, known as the "plan for autonomization," disregarded the

necessity of emphasizing the sovereignty and equality of the fraternal republics during the process of unification. It called for entrance of the republics into the Russian Federation with rights of autonomous republics, according to which the supreme organs of power of the RSFSR would have become the supreme organs of power for the entire Union.

Basic Principles Restated

In a letter to members of the Political Bureau on September 26, Lenin proposed to create a voluntary union of all the Soviet Republics with each retaining full sovereignty, including the RSFSR, in a new state entity, the USSR. "We consider ourselves, the Ukrainian SSR and others, equal," he wrote, "and enter with them on an equal basis, into a new union, a new federation, the Union of the Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia."²¹ He described "autonomization" as Great-Power policy and a deviation from principles of proletarian internationalism.

In notes dictated to his secretary on December 30-31, 1922, Lenin stated basic principles for solving problems of national inequality. He stressed that a distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of a small oppressed nation. Members of oppressor nations have nearly always been guilty of violence against oppressed nations. So that internationalism on the part of oppressor nations must consist not only in observance of the formal equality of nations, but even in the inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice.

In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past . . . for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; "offended" nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest—to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency toward the national minorities . . .²²

In October 1922 the Central Committee plenum approved Lenin's proposals and began preparatory work on the formation of the USSR. During its opening session on December 1922, the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR ratified the Declarations and Treaty on the Formation of the USSR, embodying Lenin's draft. In April 17-25, 1923, the 12th Congress of the RCP(B) adopted a resolution on the national question based on Lenin's notes.

Formation of the USSR, and its implementation of Lenin's principles for

realizing national equality, accelerated the process of state formation among the nations and nationalities of the country. By the end of 1922 there were 6 independent and 10 autonomous Soviet Republics, 2 People's Soviet Republics and 15 autonomous national regions. In 1924 there were 4 Union Republics, 13 Autonomous Republics, and 13 Autonomous Regions. At the end of 1936 there were 11 Union Republic, 22 Autonomous Republics, 9 Autonomous Regions and 8 National Areas. Today there are 15 Union Republics, 20 Autonomous Republics, 8 Autonomous Regions, and 10 Autonomous Areas. From one unitary state dominated by one nation, the Great-Russians, and inhabited by nearly 200 subject nations, nationalities, ethnic and ethnographic groups before the Russian Revolution of October 1917, by the end of the 1950s a total of 53 national states or national administrative units had taken shape in the USSR. These included 34 states associated on the basis of federation and autonomy, and 19 national administrative units (9 Autonomous Regions and 10 National Areas).

The rapid development of this process resulted in part from structural changes conforming to Lenin's principles of voluntary union on a basis of complete equality, sovereignty, equal rights and duties including the right freely to secede from the Union. Among the major innovations on the basis of these principles were the formation of two equal chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the highest body of state authority. Both chambers have an equal number of deputies. But the Soviet of the Union is elected by constituencies with an equal population, whereas the Soviet of Nationalities is elected without regard to the size of population, so as to ensure equal representation of each republic, autonomous region and area. Thus, each union republic is represented by 32 deputies, each autonomous republic by 11, each autonomous region by 5, and one deputy from each autonomous area, a total of 750 deputies. This structure of the highest state organ facilitated the active participation of the workers of all nations and nationalities in building socialism and conducting the affairs of the USSR.

National-territorial demarcation and the reunification into independent republics of national territories which had been fragmented in the past was another significant policy for developing the multinational, multiracial Soviet state. Under this policy of territorial-national autonomy, conforming to a crucial natural geographic condition for the development of nations, many nations and nationalities obtained independent statehood in accordance with their national interests for the first time in history.

Progress toward Factual Equality

Socialist industrialization and its accompanying cultural revolution accelerated the economic, social, political and cultural development of the formerly oppressed and deprived non-Russian peoples. Economic planning and the

federal budget facilitated the relatively more developed zones. The all-Union budget subsidized development in the less developed regions.

Consequently, the rate of economic growth in these areas always exceeded that of the central area, and this accelerated growth of the national republics has been maintained throughout the USSR's existence. According to an authoritative source, in the period between 1922 and 1981, industrial output had grown more than 900 times in Kazakhstan and Moldavia, over 1,000 times in Armenia, 874 times in Tadzhikistan, 690 times in Kirghizia, 699 times in Byelorussia, 514 times in the Russian Federation, 415 times in Uzbekistan, 276 times in the Ukraine, 292 times in Georgia, 206 times in Turkmenia, and 138 times in Azerbaidzhan. In the period 1940-1981, industrial output in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia increased 46 to 61 times.²³

Moreover, the Eleventh Five-Year Plan projects an industrial output growth for the Soviet Union as a whole of 26-28 per cent, while specifying for Azerbaidzhan and Armenia 29-32 per cent, for Byelorussia 26-29 per cent, Kazakhstan 22-25 per cent, Tadzhikistan 24-27 per cent, and 30-33 per cent for Moldavia.²⁴

Besides such structural changes projected by the Communist Party and implemented by the Soviet state, other objective forces spurred the process of multinational, multiracial state formation. The Civil War and foreign intervention had contradictory effects. They caused serious loss of life, dislocation and devastation, hardship and delays in clearing the way to building socialism. On the other hand, the ravages of the white-guard forces, the aggressions and annexationist aims of the interventions of 14 capitalist states, and the counter-revolutionary "fifth column" collaboration with the intervention among the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and nationalist leaders among the former subject-nationalities—in short, these factors made a military and political alliance of the Russian and non-Russian nations essential for their survival.

Further, the single socio-class nature of the states uniting in the USSR facilitated their voluntary unification on principles of full equality and the preservation of their sovereignty. These relations were sanctioned and legalized by the homogeneity of the basic principles and the unity of the Constitution of the USSR and the Constitution of the Union republics. By abolishing private ownership of the means of production and their conversion into public property, the Soviet republic had established the equality of all its citizens in relation to the means of production. This made income earned by labor the sole means of livelihood, thereby outlawing exploitation and universalizing both the right and the obligation to work. These principles were the basis for the multilateral development and flourishing of nations and the drawing together of socialist nations through relations of cooperation and friendship.

In 1982 the USSR observed its 60th year as a form of state association of Soviet nations and nationalities, designed for the entire historic period of the

gradual development of socialist statehood until it is succeeded by the next stage, Communist public self-government. Multinational and multiracial in its composition, internationalist in its policy and ideology, its organizational structure and mass organizations, the existence of the USSR constitutes a victory of the practical implementation of proletarian internationalism, of the science of solving the national question and realizing the equality of nations and nationalities, as discovered and elaborated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and their followers.

Lenin summed up some of the principles of this science. He wrote that:

It is impossible to abolish national (or any other political) oppression under capitalism, since this requires the abolition of classes, i.e., the introduction of socialism. But while being based on economics, socialism cannot be reduced to economics alone. A foundation—socialist production—is essential for the abolition of national oppression, but this foundation must also carry a democratically organized state, a democratic army, etc. By transforming capitalism into socialism the proletariat creates the possibility of abolishing national oppression; the possibility becomes reality only—"only"!—with the establishment of full democracy in all spheres, including the delineation of state frontiers in accordance with the "sympathies" of the population, including complete freedom to secede. And this, in turn, will serve as a basis for developing the practical elimination of even the slightest national friction and the least national mistrust, for an accelerated drawing together and fusion of nations that will be completed when the state withers away. This is the Marxist theory . . . ²⁵ (Emphasis in original.) □

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YURI POLYAKOV

How the USSR Was Formed

Russia had long been a multinational state. At the beginning of the twentieth century its population included scores of peoples at markedly different stages of economic, social and cultural development. Some were still at the stage of feudalism, while the small nationalities of the North and the Far East had not yet emerged from patriarchal-tribal society. So it was only natural that there were tribes and many ethnic groups which did not form a single nationality and were even still unaware of their national identity.

In 1917 the territory which was to become the USSR was inhabited by 147.6 million people. The Russians (77.7 million) were the largest in number. They mostly lived in the European part of Russia — from the northwest frontier of the Baltic coast to the Urals, from the Arctic seas to the southern steppes. In the districts of Central Russia (Moscow and the surrounding administrative units), Northwest Russia (Petrograd, Novgorod and Pskov) and Northern Russia (Vyatka, Vologda and Archangel), Russians formed and still form today the absolute and compact majority of the population.

In the region of the Middle Volga and the foothills of the Urals Tatars, Bashkirs, Mordvinians, Chuvashes and Udmurts live along with Russians, while the boundless expanses of the Urals, Siberia and the Soviet Far East are inhabited by Yakuts, Buryats, and peoples such as the Udighes, Evenks, Chukchis and many others who number very few.

The southern part of the country bordering on the Black Sea is predominantly inhabited by Ukrainians, the second largest Slav people. In 1922 they numbered 30.4 million while the Byelorussians living in the West on the border with Poland numbered 4.2 million. In Transcaucasia, on the border with Turkey and Iran, live the Armenians, Georgians and Azerbaidzhanians, while the mountains and valleys of the North Caucasus have long been inhabited by scores of mountain peoples — Chechens, Circassians, Ossetians, Kabardins and many others.

In the southeast, the lands of Central Asia and Kazakhstan stretch for thousands of kilometers. To the east these are bounded by China and to the south by Iran and Afghanistan. There live Kazakhs, Kirghizes, Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Turkmen, Kara-Kalpaks and others.

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But from looking at the political and administrative map of old Russia no one could gather that it was a multinational state.

The whole country was divided into eight areas ruled by general-governors, one vice-gerency in the Caucasus, many *gubernias* and several regions. Territories where very different peoples live were split up among different administrative units.

The non-Russians, half the population of Russia, were treated by tsarist officials as "aliens" and second-rate citizens. The national regions were, as a rule, economically backward and the outlying parts of the country were regarded solely as a source of raw materials. Sixty per cent of all industry was concentrated in the heart of the country and in the Urals. Although Transcaucasia and Central Asia produced cotton, over 93 per cent of it was processed in Central Russia. The only industry in Central Asia was a few railway workshops and small enterprises for the initial processing of agricultural raw materials, such as cotton ginneries, dairies and tanneries. The proletariat was only beginning to emerge there and workers' living and working conditions were even worse than those in Central Russia. Most enterprises in Central Asia had an average working day of 13 hours. In Turkestan the average wages in manufacturing industries in 1908 were 60 per cent lower than the average for the Russian Empire.

The condition of people working on the land in national regions was no better. They were under the twin oppression of officials of the tsarist colonial apparatus and the local feudal lords and clan nobility who kept the rural poor in dire straits. A growing number of peasant households were left without land, livestock or farm tools. In 1917 in Turkestan, 64.5 per cent of farmers were classed as poor, about 15 per cent were landless and 35.5 per cent had no draft animals. The living standards of most of the cattle-breeding nomads of Central Asia were also very low: more than 11 per cent had no livestock of their own, while feudal lords comprising no more than three per cent of the population owned almost half the cattle.

The working people in the outlying national regions lacked virtually all political rights. All power belonged to tsarist officials, who ruled cleverly exploiting the traditional influence of local clan chiefs and feudal lords. Oppressors belonging to one's "own" nationality were just as bad as "foreigners." Everywhere tsarism resorted to the old Roman principle: divide and rule. Both in the outlying regions and in the center it fostered mutual distrust and provoked intercommunal strife, which often had a religious slant.

While the general level of literacy was very low — more than 66 per cent of all adults could neither read nor write — virtually the entire population of the outlying national areas was illiterate. Nothing like a health service was to be found in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the Volga region or the North Caucasus.

Before the October Revolution almost all the peoples of Russia were far

removed from the main road of social, economic and cultural progress. Suffering from twin oppression, national and social, they began to take an ever more active part in the struggle. The strike movement grew. National disturbances and uprisings broke out in many parts of Russia. In 1916 an uprising spread to many regions of Central Asia. These two streams of liberation struggle merged, because they both pursued the same aim — to change the existing order of things. This could be achieved only by the revolutionary overthrow of the system based on exploitation — in other words, by a socialist revolution.

The national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples was one of the most important factors in the whole advance of the revolutionary process. It is true that in the national liberation movement there were members of the propertied and even rich sections and groups pursuing narrowly national aims, but these tended to cause divisions in the movement as a whole. They formed nationalist parties and strove to increase their influence. However, the internationalist unifying trend prevailed. All peoples suffered from oppression and all were beginning to understand that they should struggle against it in a united front. Gradually they were also beginning to see that their "own," "national" oppressors were reaching an understanding with tsarism and the Russian capitalists and that this was an obstacle to social and national emancipation.

In turn, the Russian working class and its party, the Communist Party, could exercise leadership of the socialist revolution and overthrow the rule of tsarism and the bourgeoisie only in alliance with other social sections equally interested in radical change. These sections were the millions of Russian peasants and the oppressed nationalities. The founder and leader of the Communist Party, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, tirelessly stressed the need for an alliance of the revolutionary proletariat with the enslaved peoples. "We must link the revolutionary struggle for socialism with a revolutionary program on the nationalities question," he wrote in 1915.

From February to October

In February-March 1917 there was a bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia. Tsar Nicholas II abdicated the throne. But that revolution did not resolve the problems facing the country.

The bourgeois Provisional Government did not meet any of the demands which the masses of working people had inscribed on their banners in accomplishing the revolution. The government continued the war against Germany, although the people demanded the speediest possible conclusion of peace. It refused to hand the landowners' land over to the peasants who were in need of land, it failed to satisfy the pressing demands of the workers and to take effective measures to solve the nationalities question. The Provisional Government was in fact continuing the old policy, leaving the whole tsarist ap-

paratus of oppression intact.

In May a wave of strikes began at enterprises in Tashkent, Kokand, Namanagan, Samarkand and Kattakurgan, where Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Russians and Kirghizes demanded an eight-hour working day and better working conditions.

As a rule, natives of Kazakhstan and Central Asia were not called up for military service. But when the First World War broke out in 1914 many Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kirghizes and Tadzhiks were mobilized for work behind the front. After the February Revolution they started returning home and addressing meetings in their home towns and villages, explaining why the struggle had to go on. At a large meeting in Namanagan, for example, these workers urged: "Stop heeding the beys, mullahs and capitalists! We must unite in a Soviet!"

The Great October Socialist Revolution

Thus, a countrywide crisis had ripened in Russia by the fall of 1917. The workers' strike movement assumed an unprecedented scale. Among the major strikes — the general strike of railwaymen, the strike of 100,000 workers in the Urals and of 300,000 textile workers in the Ivanovo-Kineshma region — were mass actions such as the oil workers' strike in Baku, in which Russians, Azerbaidzhanians, Armenians and workers from Daghestan acted together, and the strike of Russian and Ukrainian coalminers in the Donets coal basin.

The peasant movement grew into veritable uprisings everywhere. In the *gubernias* (provinces) of Central Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia, where landed estates were particularly widespread and therefore the land hunger of the peasant masses was felt especially keenly, peasants seized landlord estates and clashed with government troops.

Heading the revolutionary struggle, the Bolsheviks worked tirelessly among the people, explaining the essence of what was happening. Raymond Robins, a prominent American who was in Russia during the revolution, said on his return home that Bolshevik propaganda dovetailed with the aspirations of the masses like the breath of a man blowing in the same direction as an elemental hurricane.

The triumph of the October Socialist Revolution on October 25 (November 7, new style) was announced to the world by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Representing the overwhelming majority of the *gubernias* and cities of the country, its delegates included envoys from the major national regions — the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic area, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Kazakhstan and the national areas of the Volga region. Delegates from the Soviets of Kiev (the Ukraine), Minsk (Byelorussia), Revel (Estonia), Dvinsk (Latvia), Baku (Azerbaidzhan), Tiflis (Georgia), Tashkent (Turkestan), Kazan (Tataria), Izhevsk (Udmurtia) and Saransk (Mordovia), along with delegates from Petrograd, Moscow, the Urals and Siberia, gathered in the white-columned assembly hall of the Smolny Institute to proclaim the dawn of a new era in the history of Russia.

The revolutionary storm broke the fetters of age-old national oppression. The *Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia* was signed on November 2 (15), 1917 by Lenin, who headed the Council of People's Commissars, the first Soviet government. The liberation and emancipation of the peoples of Russia, the Declaration said, "should be conducted resolutely and irrevocably." Four brief points in the Declaration summed up the program of the Soviet Government on the nationalities question:

1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia;
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of independent states;
3. The abolition of all national and religious privileges;
4. The free development of the national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.

In January 1918, the Third All Russia Congress of Soviets adopted the historic *Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People*, which put the seal of law on the establishment of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR): "The Soviet Russian Republic is established on the basis of the free union of free nations as a federation of Soviet national republics."

The Congress adopted a decision *On the Federal Institutions of the Russian Republic* containing a detailed description of the features of the Soviet Federation. The decision announced that the supreme organ of power in the federation was the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and, in the periods between congresses, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Taking note of the fact that the process of forming national Soviet republics was still continuing, the Congress declared: "The way in which Soviet republics and separate regions differing in their ways of life and national composition shall participate in the federal government, as also the demarcation of the Russian Republic, will immediately upon the formation of regional Soviet republics be determined by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the executive committees of these republics."

A special state body, the *People's Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities*, was established to guide and coordinate state activities to draw the formerly oppressed peoples into participation in the common effort to build a new life. The commissariat was headed by Joseph Stalin, a leading Party figure who even before the Revolution had become known for his writings on the nationalities question. The commissariat had departments, each of which was responsible for work in particular national regions. The *gubernia* and *uyezd* (county) Soviets also had special departments dealing with the affairs of national minorities.

New Names on the Map

Having won victory in the revolution and with it won the right to their own national statehood, the peoples of Russia set about exercising this right.

After Soviet rule was established in the Ukraine, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was founded at the First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets on December 12 (25).

A resolution *On the Self-Determination of the Ukraine* stressed that in its activities the Ukrainian Republic would in every way contribute to the consolidation of the closest ties with the Russian Federation.

Then the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic was founded. A manifesto published on January 1, 1919 stated that all power in Byelorussia had passed into the hands of Soviets of worker, peasant, farm-hand and Red Army men deputies. The First Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia, held in February 1919 adopted a resolution recognizing "the necessity of establishing close economic and political ties with its senior brother, the Russian Soviet Republic." Late 1918 and early 1919 saw the emergence of the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian Soviet Republics on the Baltic coast.

After a long struggle against foreign intervention by German, Turkish, British and other forces and against the forces of counterrevolution within the country, Soviet power won and independent Soviet socialist republics were established in Transcaucasia. On April 28, 1920, the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaidzhan headed by Nariman Narimanov, a well-known Azerbaidzhanian revolutionary, writer and enlightener, issued an appeal to the population stating: "All power in the country has passed into the hands of the working classes. A new, bright era of socialism is dawning for the workers and peasants of Azerbaidzhan."

On November 29, 1920, the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed, and on February 25, 1921, Grigori (Sergo) Ordzhonikidze, a prominent leader of the Georgian and all-Russia revolutionary movement, wrote in a telegram to Lenin from the capital of Georgia: "The Red Banner of Soviet power is fluttering over Tiflis. Long live Soviet Georgia!" Thus new state-administrative units without precedent in history — national Soviet socialist republics — appeared on the map of the country.

But in those years not all the peoples of Russia could establish their own independent states. The various peoples were at different levels of development. Many were economically, culturally and politically extremely backward. In addition, some were numerically small.

The problem was to find forms of national self-determination corresponding to their overall level, to create a flexible system of national-state structure conforming to the vital interests and real possibilities of their peoples. That is why, alongside independent national republics, *autonomous republics* and

autonomous regions emerged which became part of the Russian Republic, which was accordingly called the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

The first of these, Turkestan (Central Asia), was formed in the spring of 1918 within the borders of the former Turkestan Governor-Generalship. The native population consisted of Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Kirghizes and Turkmen and a considerable number of Russians. The second was the Bashkir Republic, lying between the Volga and the Urals. It was formed in March 1919. Following it two further autonomous republics came into being — the Tatar Republic in the middle reaches of the Volga with its capital at Kazan and the Daghestan Republic in the North Caucasus.

In 1920 the Kazakh Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was established in a vast territory of 2.7 million square kilometers extending from the Caspian Sea and the Ural River to Siberia, the Altai and the border with China.

The formation of national autonomies was a complicated and fairly lengthy process. In many areas there was a mixed population. In Central Asia, for example, Uzbek villages alternated with Tadzhik and Turkmenian villages. In some places scattered tribes still existed. The complexity of the process of national self-determination may be seen in the case of the North Caucasus, where many numerically small peoples live. Initially along with Daghestan there was the Gorskaya (Mountain) Autonomous Republic. It embraced peoples differing in origin, language and cultural level and linked only by living close to one another and by their common way of life. For that reason they soon expressed the wish to form their own autonomies. First the Ossetians and then the Chechens and Ingushes seceded from the Gorskaya Republic. As a result, instead of one republic there appeared, and exist to this day, five national autonomous republics — the North Ossetian, Kabardin-Balkar, Chechen-Ingush, Karachai-Circassian and Adygei republics. The Soviet government supported the national aspirations of each people, seeing to it that their interests were not infringed and that no one people obtained any privileges and rights at the expense of another.

A similar process was under way in other parts of the country.

In the Volga region the Chuvash, Udmurt, Mordovian, Mari and Kalmyk Autonomous Regions emerged. The Karelian Labor Commune was founded in the northwest near the border with Finland. The Autonomous Region of the Komi people was formed in the forests of the north of the European part of the Russian Federation and the Buryat Autonomous Region was established near the Lake Baikal in Siberia.

In the 1920s and 1930s, as their economies and culture developed, many autonomous regions were transformed into autonomous republics.

In 1921 the Yakut Autonomous Republic was established on a vast territory of more than three million square kilometers in northeastern Siberia.

The People's Republics of Bokhara and Khorasm

Some explanation is needed about the situation in Central Asia. Before the Revolution, alongside territories forming integral parts of the Russian Empire, there were two vassal states which were Russian protectorates — the Bokhara Emirate and the Khiva Khanate. They were typical medieval despotic states where time seemed to have come to a stop.

In the Bokhara Emirate more than 85 per cent and in the Khiva Khanate more than 95 per cent of the cultivated land belonged to secular and religious feudal lords and senior officials. The peasants surrendered a considerable portion of their harvest to the Emir or the Khan as tithes and were burdened with unpaid services to the nobility. In Bokhara more than 50 duties and taxes of various kinds were imposed on the peasants.

The bureaucratic apparatus in these states did not receive any salaries: from the omnipotent rulers of regions to the lowest scribe, all the officials lived off the backs of the working population. Under such a system there were practically no limits to violence, arbitrary rule, extortion and bribery. This barbarous system rested on the absolute, terrifying and ruthless power of the Emir and the Khan.

For the slightest offense, not to mention disobedience, people were subjected to cruel public executions such as being thrown down from high minarets onto stone slabs or being hung on hooks. Thousands of people languished in underground prison cells swarming with snakes and scorpions.

Bokhara and Khiva were multinational states. The power of the Emir and the Khan extended to Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Karakalpaks and Kazakhs and no one people constituted a majority.

The October Revolution did not immediately shake the power of the Bokhara and Khiva rulers. But there was mounting discontent among the population, who gradually learned what was happening in neighboring Soviet Russia, and people's revolutions took place in Khiva in the spring of 1920 and in Bokhara in the fall of that year. The Khan and the Emir were dethroned. The Emir of Bokhara fled to Afghanistan together with all his wealth. The caravan of 300 camels laden with the Emir's harem and trunks full of gold, silver and jewels was several kilometers long.

The Khiva Khanate was replaced by the Khorasm People's Soviet Republic and the Bokhara Emirate by the Bokhara People's Soviet Republic. Important democratic transformations were carried out. The properties of the former Emir and Khan were turned over to the people. The peasants were freed from feudal duties. A land reform was launched under which the peasants received the land that had belonged to rich feudal lords. The elimination of illiteracy began. In this world, where everything seemed to have stopped forever, time resumed its course.

This complex and many-staged process continued in later years: ever new autonomous formations appeared, the borders of national regions were determined, autonomous regions were transformed into autonomous republics and autonomous republics into union republics. But the main contours of the Soviet national-state structure had already emerged in the first five years following the Revolution.

Civil War and Foreign Intervention

Considerable forces representing the old Russia still remained in the country — former landlords, bankers, the owners of factories and mills, tsarist officials and members of the nobility. After being overthrown, they did not lay down their arms but continued to resist the rule of workers and peasants with increasing ferocity and eventually unleashed a civil war. The first armed actions of the forces of counterrevolution near Petrograd, on the Don and in the South Urals were fairly easily suppressed. It was becoming clear that, having the support of the bulk of the population, Soviet power could crush the resistance of the forces of counterrevolution in the country completely and comparatively quickly.

But the struggle became long drawn out, hard and bloody because external forces, namely the major capitalist countries, came to the aid of the forces of counterrevolution in Russia and through open military intervention launched a large-scale way against Soviet Russia.

At first the country was invaded by German, Austro-Hungarian and Turkish troops. They forced upon it the rapacious Brest Peace Treaty, according to which they occupied vast territories in the west and southwest including the whole Baltic area, the Ukraine and Byelorussia. Shortly afterwards, violating the provisions of the Brest Peace Treaty, German forces moved into the Crimea and the Caucasus.

At the same time the Entente states began armed intervention against Soviet Russia. In disregard of all the standards of international law and of its own agreements and obligations, Romania occupied neighboring Bessarabia (now Moldavia).

In the spring and summer of 1918, first British and then US troops landed in Murmansk and Archangel in the north, and simultaneously Japanese, British and US troops began to occupy the Far Eastern regions of the country, seizing the seaport of Vladivostok on April 5. In August 1918 British troops coming from Iran occupied the Transcaspian Region.

At first the leaders of the Entente powers explained their actions by the need to "help" their former ally, to prevent the seizure of Russian territories by the German army. The real reason was quite a different one: the leaders of the capitalist powers were striving to destroy the world's first worker and peasant

state. The October Revolution had deprived Western capitalists of their factories and mills, concessions and capital investments and they were eager to regain them.

Thus, after the defeat of Germany, Austro-Hungary and Turkey in the First World War, armed intervention was stepped up. In early 1919 there were at least 130,000 foreign soldiers in the south. At various times and on a varying scale 14 foreign powers participated in the intervention. A tight blockade was established, so that not a single ship, even carrying food or medical aid, could reach Soviet Russia. The Entente powers sent huge quantities of arms and supplies to the armed forces of the Russian counterrevolution.

The linking up of the forces of international and domestic reaction presented a mortal danger to all the peoples of Russia: their independence and freedom were at stake, because the great powers had reached agreement on partitioning the country and turning its territories into colonies, protectorates and zones of influence.

The Ukraine was the scene of heavy fighting. Byelorussia experienced the horrors of foreign invasion. At different times and for varying periods the interventionist and White Guard forces occupied areas in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the Caucasus and the Volga region.

A particularly difficult situation arose in the Baltic republics. As has been said, in late 1918 and early 1919 the independent Soviet Republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia were established. But they were attacked by foreign invaders and the internal forces of counterrevolution. Hostilities against the Baltic republics were conducted by German, Swedish, Finnish and Danish troops. The US, Britain and France spent many millions of dollars on forming and equipping detachments of Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian counter-revolutionaries, who were actively supported from the sea by British warships. Soviet rule was overthrown in the Baltic republics and power passed into the hands of the capitalists. Only twenty years later did they rejoin the family of Soviet republics.

The struggle of the peoples of Soviet Russia against foreign intervention and the forces of internal counterrevolution was waged throughout the country, from the shores of the Baltic to the Pacific Coast and from the Arctic port of Murmansk to the Pamir Mountains. Only by the end of 1920 were the main forces of the enemy defeated, while in some regions hostilities went on — the Japanese invaders, for instance, were driven from Vladivostok only at the end of 1922.

Among other things victory was won thanks to the close unity of all the peoples of the country in the struggle for a common cause. In the course of the military struggle this unity grew in strength and acquired new meaning.

On June 1, 1919, representatives of the Soviet Republics of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Byelorussia adopted a decision on establishing

a military union and giving it legal force. Fully adhering to the principle of recognizing the independence, freedom and self-determination of the working people, the decision envisaged a close amalgamation of military command, economic councils, railway management and facilities, finance and the commissariats of labor.

This voluntary union dictated by the vital interests of the peoples and reinforced by the experience of hard struggle, was formed during the years of the Civil War. It was a single multinational army that defended Soviet power. Russian workers, who formed the core of the Soviet armed forces, fought on all fronts. They welded together the many million strong mass of the peasants who rallied under the banners of the Red Army. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian workers and peasants fought shoulder to shoulder with Russian Red Armymen. Remarkable bravery was displayed by Latvian riflemen, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Bashkirs, Tatars and people of other nationalities. Addressing the Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Kazakhs and Turkmen fighting on the Turkestan front in 1920, the outstanding army commander and statesman Mikhail Frunze said, "You have come together regardless of language, race or religion in a fraternal union of workers and poor peasants and you have saved the situation. You have earned the deepest gratitude of our socialist homeland and of the proletariat of the whole world."

Towards the end of the Civil War the Soviet Republics of Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaidzhan, Armenia and Georgia had voluntarily combined the operation of their armed forces, large-scale industry, finance, transport and communications. This unification was affirmed in various agreements. From then on delegates of all the socialist republics took part in the work of all-Russia congresses of Soviets and were elected to the supreme organ of power of the Russian Federation, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (ARCEC). Treaties reaffirmed the inviolability of the principles of the equality of peoples and the preservation of each republic's sovereignty.

In all the Soviet republics overall political leadership was given by their Communist Parties, which together comprised the single Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), or RCP(B).

The Civil War years were thus an important stage in developing and strengthening the union of the peoples. Lenin told the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets, "The task which now confronts us is to transfer our wartime experience to the sphere of peaceful construction. The main period of the civil wars we have been fighting lies behind us, and . . . ahead of us lies the main period of peaceful construction which means so much to all of us, which we desire, which we must carry out and to which we shall dedicate all our energies and our whole lives. We can now say . . . that in the main, in the military and in the international sphere, we have been victorious. The path of peaceful construction opens up before us."

The Foundations of Unity

Towards the end of the Civil War there were several independent Soviet republics on the territory of old Russia. The biggest, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, embraced the regions in central, northern and northwestern Russia, the Urals and Siberia mainly inhabited by Russians. It included also Kazakhstan and the national autonomous formations in the Volga region, Central Asia and the North Caucasus. Russians constituted about 80 per cent of the population of the RSFSR. Being the first multinational Soviet state, the Russian Federation was a prototype of the future USSR. Its territory was more than 20 million square kilometers and its population nearly 100 million.

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic occupied about 500,000 square kilometers and its population of more than 26 million included over 70 per cent Ukrainians. Russians and people of many other nationalities also lived there.

At that time the Byelorussian SSR was small in both territory and population. In 1924 its borders were extended to include several districts in the Gomel and Vitebsk *gubernias* with a predominantly Byelorussian population.

In 1922 the three Transcaucasian Soviet Republics, Azerbaidzhan, Armenia and Georgia, with a total population of six million, joined to form the Transcaucasian Soviet Federation Socialist Republic. The Georgian SSR included the Abkhasian and Adzhar Autonomous Republics and the South Ossetian Autonomous Region.

In Central Asia the Turkestan Autonomous SSR bordered on the Bokhara and Khoresm People's Soviet Republics with a population of three to four million.

By the time the Civil War ended and peaceful construction began all the Soviet Republics were linked by a set of treaties, but they did not yet constitute a single state. It became more important than ever for these republics to unite. The country had been ravaged by war. The regions where the White Guards and intervention armies had been presented a terrible picture of devastation — mines flooded, blast furnaces blown up, machinery damaged, bridges and railway stations destroyed and crops trampled flat. Some branches of industry, such as metallurgy and coal mining, had been reduced to the 18th-century level. Restoration of the economy called for vast efforts. If each people set about the task separately it would take dozens of years to regain the prewar (1913) level. Clearly, the task could be accomplished much faster if efforts were pooled.

But it was not enough merely to regain the prewar level. The task was substantially to develop the leading branches of industry. Joint efforts were obviously needed.

The difficulties were increased because the various peoples were at different levels of development. Though they all now had equal rights, in fact inequality remained because many of them were extremely backward. This had to be overcome in the shortest possible period, which could only be done with the

help of the more advanced peoples, the Russian people in the first place. This aid, too, could be most effectively given within the framework of a single state.

Although the fighting was over, the danger of aggression remained. So it was still necessary to join forces in order to withstand economic and diplomatic pressure and to face the increasing military threats from abroad.

All these factors led to a broad movement of the peoples for establishing a single Soviet state. Life itself demanded an even closer union of the peoples; the existing treaty relations no longer matched the new situation.

In the spring of 1922, on the initiative of the Ukraine, supported by Byelorussia and Transcaucasia, discussion began concerning the principles and form union should take. In August the Central Committee of the RCP(B) set up a special commission to examine the matter, including such leading Party members as Joseph Stalin, Valerian Kuibyshev and Grigori Ordzhonikidze and representatives of all the Soviet republics.

A state of a type never before known to history was to be established. The form was not found at once. According to one draft the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaidzhan, Armenia and Georgia were to become parts of the RSFSR as autonomous republics. But in this instance the principle of autonomous formations would have infringed the rights of these republics and could have harmed relations between the nations. There were also proposals of an opposite nature, that the republics be united on the basis of confederation. This would have meant no single citizenship, no single budget, no uniform diplomacy, and would have tended to disunite rather than unite the republics.

To surmount these two erroneous trends Lenin proposed creating a new form of statehood, a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics based on the full equality of all the republics constituting it.

On September 26, 1922, Lenin wrote to the members of the Political Bureau: "We recognize ourselves as equals of the Ukrainian SSR and others and join, on an equal footing with them a new union, a new federation." On October 6 a plenary meeting of the RCP(B) Central Committee fully supported Lenin's proposal and adopted a resolution accordingly: "To regard as necessary the conclusion of a treaty of the republics and the RSFSR on their unification into a 'Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,' each of them to retain the right of free secession from the 'Union.' " In the fall of 1922 meetings and congresses of local Soviets were held throughout the country. It was a kind of referendum in the course of which the working people spoke out in favor of establishing the USSR as speedily as possible.

A resolution of the Yerevan (Armenia) Uyezd Congress of Soviets stated: "Only a close union of the Soviet republics will make possible their rapid revival and successful construction of a great Soviet federation." A Tiflis (Georgia) City Party conference resolved: "This new fraternal union of equals, which has no precedent in the world, fully accords with the vital interests of the

peoples of the land of the Soviets, whose political consolidation and economic development demands their joining together in a single powerful Union of Soviets."

In December congresses of the Soviets of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Transcaucasian Federation and the Russian Federation were held, and adopted similar resolutions. The unanimous resolutions of the congresses gave legislative expression to the resolve of the peoples to establish a Union state. The congresses elected delegates to the First All-Union Congress of Soviets. It was this congress which unanimously adopted the *Treaty and Declaration on the Formation of the USSR*.

What the Formation of the USSR Signified

It would be difficult to exaggerate the historic international significance of the formation of the USSR. The Socialist Revolution had brought about real unity of the peoples of the country. Any system based on exploitation, whether slave-owning, feudal or capitalist, does not unite peoples. But socialism radically changes the nature of relations between nations. This was foreseen by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, who wrote in the Manifesto of the Communist party:

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.

The establishment of the USSR showed that the abolition of the antagonisms between classes within a nation leads to the disappearance of the antagonisms between nations.

After the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR it was necessary to draft a Constitution and set up central organs of power. The draft Constitution prepared by a Constitutional Commission was discussed and approved in the republics. It was endorsed by the Central Executive Committee of the USSR in July 1923 and ratified by the Second Congress of Soviets of the USSR in January 1924. The first Union government, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, headed by Vladimir I. Lenin, began to function.

In accord with the Constitution All-Union Commissariats (Ministries) were set up to deal with foreign, military and naval affairs, foreign trade, railways, and postal and telegraphic services. There also existed what were called United Commissariats which formed part of the government of the USSR as a whole and at the same time existed in every Union republic (commissariats for worker-and-peasant inspection, labor, foodstuffs, finance and the supreme economic councils). There were commissariats which only formed part of the governments of the Union republics (republican commissariats) but were not

found in the system of Union government, such as those for agriculture, justice, internal affairs, education, health protection and social security. Their work was most closely connected with specific features of the way of life and culture of different nations.

Just as before, every Union republic had highest bodies of state authority and administration, such as Congresses of Soviets, Central Executive Committees and governments (Councils of People's Commissars) which could adopt laws and dealt with all aspects of state life with the exception of those that fell under the jurisdiction of the USSR.

The appeal *To All the Peoples and Governments of the USSR in Connection with the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, issued by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR on July 13, 1923, stated:

The Union state founded . . . on the basis of fraternal cooperation of the peoples of the Soviet Republics sets itself the aim of preserving peace with all peoples. In close interaction and working together, equal nationalities hand in hand will develop their culture and wellbeing and accomplish the tasks of the working people's government.

Being a natural ally of the oppressed peoples, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics seeks friendly relations and economic cooperation with all peoples. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics considers its aim to be to further the interests of the working people of all the world. Over vast expanses from the Baltic, the Black and White Seas to the Pacific Ocean, it realizes fraternity among the peoples, at the same time striving to promote friendly cooperation with the peoples of the whole world.

Restoring and Developing the Economy

The restoration of the national economy which invading armies had destroyed and raising it to the prewar level required a tremendous amount of hard work and a fairly long period of time. The prewar level was attained on the whole by 1926, and even later in some sectors of the economy. In those years the built-in advantages of the USSR's state structure manifested themselves most strikingly. The first was the ability to concentrate united efforts on solving the particular problems of general importance which were the most urgent at the particular moment and to tackle them precisely where they arose. From 1922 to 1926, for example, 60 per cent of all the resources allocated for the iron and steel industry was spent on restoring the iron and steel industry of the Ukraine, which was at that time the country's principal metallurgical center. In turn, the Ukraine supplied coal and grain to many regions which badly needed both. Armenia, which had suffered particularly great damage in the years of foreign intervention, Georgia and Azerbaidzhan, the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan regularly received considerable financial assistance from the Russian federation as well as machinery, industrial plant and consumer goods. The budgets of the majority of the national republics at that time were small and had

a deficit. So the Russian Federation and the Ukraine contributed more to the USSR state budget and received less from it than the other republics.

The restoration of the economy was followed by the industrialization of the country, the establishment of modern industries, of large factories and mills in all republics. Collective farms making wide use of machinery emerged in the villages in place of the multitude of fragmented and economically feeble small holdings. Farm labor became immeasurably more productive and efficient.

As in previous years, backward regions received from the all-Union budget a considerable part of the resources they needed for their industrial development. In Turkmenia, for instance, from 1926 to 1932 subsidies from the all-Union budget amounted to more than half the republican budget. In Tadzhikistan at times these subsidies comprised 80 per cent of the republican budget. Industrial and cultural centers such as Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov and Gorky sent specialists to Central Asia, the Caucasus and other national regions and helped them to train skilled workers, technicians and engineers. Thanks to such aid the rates of industrial development in many national republics — Byelorussia, Tadzhikistan, Kirghizia and Georgia — even surpassed the average all-Union rate.

The great strides the country took from backwardness to progress were particularly striking in the regions that had lagged centuries behind the developed ones. Modern factories and mills appeared in large republics where industry formerly was represented by a few primitive workshops.

Great cultural progress was made in a very short time. In the Central Asian republics, for example, where the level of literacy before the Revolution was from 2 to 4 per cent, it reached 79 to 83 per cent by the end of the thirties. Medical services were organized in all the national republics. Many institutions of higher education, research establishments, theaters, recreation centers and libraries sprang up everywhere. Peoples who had not had written languages of their own now had their own literatures. Teachers, doctors, agronomists, engineers, scientists from among the local population appeared in numbers which any civilized state could envy.

As years went by the gap between the less developed and more developed peoples steadily diminished and was eventually closed.

The Second World War: A Test of Strength

The strong bonds between the Soviet peoples stood the test of time not only in peacetime but also in the severe testing time of war. In 1941, when Hitler Germany attacked the Soviet Union, all its peoples rose as one to rebuff the enemy. Both the western republics, which became fields of fierce battle and were temporarily occupied, and the eastern republics thousands of kilometers away from the front rallied together and equally displayed their firm will for victory. And they won.

The task of reconstruction was exceedingly difficult: the German fascist invaders had burned down and destroyed 1,710 towns and settlements and more than 70,000 villages; they demolished 32,000 industrial enterprises and 65,000 kilometers of railway track.

The whole country helped to restore industry and agriculture in the regions that had suffered under enemy occupation. From that test the community of the peoples of the Soviet Union emerged even stronger than before.

Emergence of New Republics

In Central Asia in 1922 there were the Turkestan Autonomous Republic, which was part of the RSFSR, as well as the Bokhara and Khoresm People's Soviet Republics, which at that time had not yet joined the USSR. All these were multinational formations and each of their peoples in the interests of their fuller and more natural development inevitably faced the historic task of setting up national Soviet states on these territories. Scientific studies made it possible to compile an accurate ethnographic map of Central Asia. National-state demarcation of the peoples was carried out in 1924 according to their wishes. As a result, sovereign national Soviet states emerged: the Uzbek, Turkmen, Tadzhik, Kirghiz and Kara-Kalpak Republics.

In 1925 Congresses of Soviets of the Uzbek and Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republics asked the USSR to admit them to membership. The Third All-Union Congress of Soviets in May 1925 granted their request. Tadzhikistan was transformed into a Union Republic and joined the USSR in 1929.

At the end of 1936 a new Constitution of the USSR was adopted. In accord with the 1936 Constitution the Kirghiz and Kazakh Autonomous Republics were transformed into Union Republics and admitted to the USSR. In the 15 years of the existence of the Transcaucasian Federation, each of its constituent republics had attained a high level of economic and cultural development. So in accord with the new Constitution Azerbaidzhan, Armenia and Georgia entered the USSR directly, as Union Republics.

In July 1940 Soviet power was restored in the Baltic area as a result of popular revolutions in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. At the request of the Latvian, Lituanian and Estonian peoples they were admitted to the USSR as Soviet Socialist Republics.

From 1924 to 1940 the Ukrainian SSR incorporated the Moldavian Autonomous Republic, which lay on the east bank of the Dniester. A greater part of the territory inhabited by Moldavians — Bessarabia — on the west bank of the Dniester had been unlawfully occupied by Romania in 1918. This occupation had never been recognized by the Soviet Union. In 1940 by agreement with Romania the Moldavian regions of Bessarabia were reunited with the USSR. Thus the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic came into being.

The USSR Today

According to the 1979 census more than 100 nations and nationalities dwell in the Soviet Union. Of these nations and nationalities 22 number more than one million each and 30 vary in size from 100,000 to one million people.

As the new USSR Constitution adopted in 1977 states:

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an integral, federal, multinational state formed on the principle of socialist federalism as a result of the free self-determination of nations and the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics.

The USSR unites 15 Union Republics: The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Uzbek, Kazakh, Georgian, Azerbaidzhan, Lithuanian, Moldavian, Latvian, Kirghiz, Tadzhik, Armenian, Turkmen and Estonian Soviet Socialist Republics.

One Example Among Many

The national-state system of the USSR has as its purpose to ensure the most favorable conditions for the life of each of the peoples forming this system. Let us take one republic as an example.

Kabardin-Balkaria is not remarkable for the size of its territory or population or any special achievements. It is a typical autonomous soviet socialist republic. An equal among equals. It is not well known to people abroad. But this republic has existed for more than 60 years. It lies on the northern flank of the Greater Caucasus. In the south rise mighty mountains, among them the famous Elbrus. In the northeast lies the fertile valley of the Terek and its tributaries. The republic's territory is small in size — 12,500 square km. In 1979 it had a population of 667,000. It is noteworthy that in 1921, the year of its formation, there were only 210,000 people living there. The Kabardins and Balkars constitute 55 per cent of the population. Russians, Ukrainians, Ossetians, Circassians, Karachais and people of other nationalities live alongside them. A historian who visited the Caucasus at the end of the last century wrote of the Kabardin-Balkars: "Remote from cultural life, this small people has grown quite wild and stupid and shows no interest in intellectual pursuits." Today Kabardin-Balkaria is a republic with a modern industry, including machine-tool building, engineering, non-ferrous metal and chemical industries, instrument building and electrical engineering, a highly mechanized agriculture, and a well-developed culture and technology.

In the past 15 years industrial output there has almost quadrupled and the amount of energy available per land worker has tripled.

A land which up to the time of the Revolution had only a few schools is justly proud of its university, Institute of History, Philology and Economics, and its Geophysical Institute high in the mountains. In 1981 the republic opened an

agriculture and land improvement institute.

The social structure of the population has changed radically. While in 1921 rural residents were the overwhelming majority (96 per cent), today more than half are urban dwellers. The republic has its own working class, making up about two thirds of the gainfully employed population.

According to the 1920 census only about two per cent of adult Kabardins and less than one per cent of Balkars could read and write. After the October Revolution Kabardinian and Balkarian alphabets were evolved and press publications and literature in their national languages emerged. The republic now has 100 per cent literacy. Out of every 1,000 people 700 have a higher, specialized secondary or secondary education. In the past 15 years the number of specialists has increased by 170 per cent to reach 68,000.

Tremendous changes have taken place in the people's way of life. Since 1967 the average wages of factory and office workers have risen by 70 per cent and the earnings of collective farmers by 110 per cent. In the Tenth five year plan period alone (1976-80) more than 100,000 people have moved into new modern apartments.

State authority is exercised by about 5,700 deputies to the Soviets of People's Deputies representing all social groups. In all their activities the Soviets are aided by public-spirited voluntary helpers — over 90,000 industrial workers, collective farmers, office workers and professional people. In other words, one in every five adults takes part in managing the affairs of the republic.

Kabardin-Balkaria has its own Parliament — the Supreme Soviet of the republic, and its own government, the Council of Ministers. Representatives of the republic are elected to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and to both chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet. □

DORA PERKS

Overcoming Illiteracy in the USSR

The solution of the national question and the development of a policy to further equality, friendship, and mutual assistance and cooperation among Soviet nationalities were necessary prerequisites to socialist construction and national defense. To achieve these goals, it was vital to overcome the lack of educated and trained workers. To enlist the cooperation of workers and peasants, Lenin considered it important to inform them about the plans for electrification and reconstruction of industry and agriculture, and to show how education would enable them to carry out these plans for changing their lives and escaping from poverty, ignorance, and disease. The political and social revolution had preceded the cultural revolution in Russia, and Lenin used to say that it would have been much easier to build a new socialist society if it had been the other way around.

The Soviets, however, had inherited a miserable legacy from the tsar's cabal of nobles, landowners, and capitalists. Bowed down by poverty and oppression, living in miserable hovels under primitive conditions, blinded by ignorance and superstition, the workers and peasants throughout the vast Russian empire were almost totally illiterate. Only 24 per cent of the population could read and write, and in the outlying areas there was 100 per cent illiteracy. A writer in *Vestnik Vospitaniya* (*Educational News*) in 1906 estimated that to achieve universal literacy would take 120 years in the European part of Russia, 430 years in the Caucasus and Siberia, and 4,600 years in Turkestan (the present area of Central Asia).

Faced with this dismal prophecy, how did the Soviet government succeed in "cleaning out the Augean stables" and wiping out illiteracy in 20 years in a country where 130 languages were spoken by diverse nationalities, of whom only 20 had written languages?

Even before the Civil War and foreign intervention were over, the Soviet government launched a nationwide anti-illiteracy campaign, in accordance with the decree of December 1919 signed by Lenin as Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars: "... that in order to give the Republic's entire population the opportunity to take a conscious part in the country's political life, all people in the Republic between 8 and 50 years of age unable to read and

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write are obliged to study and acquire these abilities, choosing their native or the Russian language to do so. They will be taught in state schools, both at existing ones and those being established for the illiterate population according to the plans of the People's Commissariat of Education."

Letters poured into the Commissariat from people who offered to become "illiteracy liquidators," and those taking courses were given two hours off from their working day without loss of pay. Classes were held in clubs, factories, offices, and private homes, wherever space was available. In eastern regions, nomadic people even studied outdoors, grouped around tents.

The decree further ordered that trade unions, Communist Party and Young Communist League (Komsomol) branches, commissions on work among women, and other public organizations participate in the anti-illiteracy campaign, engage as teachers all those who could read and write, and pay them at regular teachers' rates.

The anti-illiteracy campaign encountered massive problems — lack of experience in organizing courses for millions of adults, and an inadequate supply of teachers, study areas, textbooks, paper, pencils, and blackboards. Undaunted, teachers compiled their own home-made textbooks from printed clippings and illustrations taken from newspapers and magazines. Pupils used charcoal and sticks of lead as "pencils," ink prepared from sugar beet, cranberries, and soot, and whitewashed walls and old pieces of sheet iron for blackboards. In addition to paid teachers, there were many unpaid volunteers, among them workers and peasants, higher school students, and even elementary schoolchildren — anyone who could read and write. In the Red Army lessons were often held between battles.

In the first three years of Soviet power, in spite of the turmoil in the country, 7,000,000 people learned to read and write.

When the Civil War and foreign intervention were finally ended, the anti-illiteracy drive was expanded to include people of all ages throughout the Soviet Union. A volunteer mass public organization, "Down With Illiteracy," headed by Mikhail Kalinin, President of the Soviet Union, with branches in factories and military units, aided the illiteracy drive by raising money for schools, libraries, and reading rooms, and by sponsoring courses for teachers. The special "how-to" materials they prepared helped inexperienced volunteers conduct classes. By the mid-1930's there were more than 1,000,000 volunteer teachers spreading literacy throughout the Soviet Union.

In 1930 the government was able to introduce compulsory elementary education in the native language or in Russian. Exceeding the government's own target, measures taken to combat illiteracy resulted in 45,000,000 people being taught to read and write in the course of the First Soviet Five-Year Plan (1928-1932). This was made possible by the widespread enthusiasm throughout the country for eradicating illiteracy and by building schools, training

teachers, and publishing textbooks.

Solving the Language Question

A giant leap forward was made when the language problem was solved.

The October Revolution had insured political equality for all the peoples of the Soviet Union, but the revolutionary working class of the republics realized that it was not enough to proclaim equality. A stupendous program was required to raise the outlying national areas to the level of the country's central regions. Social, economic, and cultural standards inherited from tsarism differed widely from people to people. In the level of their development, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the northern Caucasus, and the Siberian Far North lagged far behind Russia, the Ukraine, and the Transcaucasus. Therefore, funds which exceeded the average sums set aside for the rest of the country were allocated for the development of these backward areas. Priority was given to the solution of the national question, which was entrusted to the People's Commissariat for Nationalities, headed by Joseph Stalin.

The Tenth Party Congress in 1921 outlined the steps necessary to help the working masses of non-Russian peoples catch up with the more advanced central Russia, and sweeping measures were undertaken to support development of local cultures. The Congress adopted a program to implement Lenin's ideas for developing and consolidating Soviet statehood, legal systems, state executive and administrative bodies, the press, schools, theaters, and general educational and vocational training centers in accordance with local customs and traditions, by using the local language and involving the local population who knew the life and thinking of the people. To carry out these great social, political, economic, and cultural transformations and to do away with the appalling backwardness of so many of the peoples, the Soviet multinational state had to blaze new trails in the most underdeveloped regions. In these outlying areas of the country it was first necessary to create written languages for nationalities which had never had them.

The All-Russia Central Executive Committee instructed the People's Commissariat of Education, headed by Anatoly Lunacharsky, to set up a Committee for a New Alphabet and to coordinate the work of auxiliary committees in designated areas, including the Far North, the northern Caucasus, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia, and to appoint scientific councils to prepare textbooks and other teaching aids in local languages. For the people who had no written language before the October Revolution, like the Kirghiz, Bashkir, Chukchi, Komi, and others, the development of their culture began with the creation of a written language. For people with languages such as Uzbek and Tadzhik which had long had a written form and an illustrious ancient literature, what was needed was a thorough revamping and simplification of the alphabet and a broadening of the vocabulary to meet modern needs.

The process of creating written languages was a herculean task that engaged the efforts of many scholars, experienced teachers, and the general public. It was considered necessary to develop a written language only when it was of practical significance for tuition in school and for the publication of printed materials. A written language was considered unnecessary for tiny national groups living among other peoples whose language they knew and used as well as their own. For example, Daghestan in the northern Caucasus is inhabited by peoples who speak 30 different languages. Some of these national groups number hundreds of thousands and populate large areas. Others are very small groups living in a few villages and speaking their own language, but also knowing and using the language of their more numerous neighbors. The same is true of some small national groups living in the Far North and Central Asia. For this reason nearly 50 peoples remain without written languages of their own.

By government decree in 1917, the spelling and script of the Russian language were simplified. After careful study and public discussion, the complex question of changing the Turkic languages from the difficult Arabic script in current use to the simpler Roman alphabet was decided by the First Congress of Turkic Studies in Baku in 1926. For the first time in world history, scholars had come together to devise methods for eradicating illiteracy and bringing about the speediest cultural development of peoples speaking the Turkic languages, more than half of whom live in Central Asia and Siberia.

To complicate the problems facing Soviet scholars, the languages of the peoples of the USSR belong to some 15 linguistic families. Most widespread are the Slavic languages — Russian, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian. Turkic languages include Azerbaidzhanian, Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmenian, and Kirghiz. Among the Baltic languages are the Lithuanian and Latvian. The Georgian language belongs to the Caucasian group, and the Estonian language belongs to the Finno-Ugric group. Then there is the Armenian language, which has its own unique script. These are only some examples of the diverse linguistic families represented by the 130 languages spoken in the Soviet Union.

Special attention had to be given to terminology for the sciences, technology, and culture. The spoken language of many peoples had no words for things they had never heard of before, such as *teacher, pupil, school, Soviet, socialism, culture, art, telephone, book, cinema, theater*, or grammatical terms.

In spite of the tremendous theoretical and practical difficulties, within a short period of time written languages were worked out for 52 peoples. Some were large national groups of more than a million people, like the Kirghiz, Bashkirs, and Mordovians, while others were comparatively small nationalities like the Chukchi, Evenks, Nanai, and Tats, numbering between 10 and 20 thousand, and numerically small nationalities like the Khanty, Ket and Eskimos, of whom there were fewer than 2,000.

In the period of intensive language development, there were also failures, setbacks, and errors, such as the provision of alphabets for some very small nationalities and ethnic groups which subsequently rejected them and preferred using the literary language of the large national groups in the midst of which they lived. With experience, such mistakes were avoided. The alphabets, spelling, and terminology of the languages are still being periodically improved, but only on a local basis. Work on a written language for the Yukaghirs in the Far North was completed in 1982.

A number of languages that had been changed from Arabic script to Roman letters were changed again five years later to the Cyrillic (Russian) alphabet, to facilitate the study of both the native language and Russian.

The Role of the Russian Language

In the first post-revolutionary years, little attention had been paid to the study of the Russian language, but by the early 1930s it was evident that the lack of a common language retarded the interaction of national cultures and prevented a real consolidation of all Soviet peoples, who were now living in a multinational state. Students coming from Central Asia, the Volga area, the Caucasus, or the Far North to study in Moscow or Leningrad did not know enough Russian to understand their lecturers. Therefore a government decree was issued on introducing the study of Russian in Soviet schools.

Now Russian is the lingua franca of the Soviet Union and is studied along with the native language in all national republics. Eighty-two per cent of the people have a command of the Russian language. All school leavers are required to have a working knowledge of Russian. Bilingualism is a necessity in a multinational country like the USSR. Knowledge of Russian enables students from any national republic to continue their education in any of the country's colleges or universities, including those of Moscow and Leningrad, where the largest cultural and scientific centers are located. Specialists from any of the national republics can take jobs in any other republic without having to cope with a language barrier. Workers from many republics participated in major projects, such as developing virgin lands in Kazakhstan, building the many giant hydroelectric stations, and are now working on the "project of the century," the building of the Baikal-Amur (BAM) Railway. A knowledge of Russian makes it possible for everybody to read the multinational literature of the Soviet Union in Russian translation.

There is no single state language in the Soviet Union. Children have the right to be educated in their own language or in any of the other languages used in the schools of the republic in which they live, according to their parents' choice. In the Russian Federation, for example, 49 languages are used in the vast school network. Kirghizia has schools where teaching is done in Kirghiz, Russian, Uzbek, and Tadzhik. There are Armenian schools in Azerbaidzhan, and Azer-

baidzhanian schools in Armenia.

Pupils in schools throughout the Soviet Union study the multinational literature of their country translated into Russian. One of the textbooks used in secondary schools, *Literature Narodov SSSR (Literature of the Peoples of the USSR)* includes poetry, short stories, and novels translated from the works of writers in more than two dozen languages. Among them is the poetry of Musa Djalil, a Tatar poet who served as an officer in the Red Army during World War II. He was wounded, taken prisoner, tortured by the Germans, and kept in the Moabit Prison Camp in Germany until 1944, when he was executed. The poetry he wrote during his imprisonment was preserved by a fellow officer and printed in the Soviet Union after the war in a volume called *Moabit Notebook*, awarded the Lenin Prize posthumously.

The textbook also includes works by other famous writers who won State and Lenin Prizes, among them Chingiz Aitmatov, Rasul Gamzatov, Oles Gonchar, Berdi Kerbabayev, Petrus Brovka, Kaisin Kulyev, Eduardas Mezelaityis, Maxim Rylski, Silva Kaputikyan, and Mirzo Tursun-Zade.

In answer to a reader's question about the use of native languages and Russian in Central Asia, Boris Danilov in the *Moscow News* (#10, 1982) explained it this way: "The Russian language serves as a means of association between the different nations. And which language could be more suitable for the association of the numerous USSR nations? What language should an Estonian use to an Uzbek, a Georgian to a Yakut, or a Moldavian to a Karelian? Should they use Esperanto or import English? Or should they use the language of the biggest, i.e., the Russian nation in the country? . . . Bilingualism is well-developed in the USSR. The Uzbeks and the Georgians speak both their native languages and Russian, and millions of Russians who live outside their Republic are fluent in the local national language."

Special Problems of the Far North

Scholars encountered a multitude of problems in creating languages for the indigenous peoples of the outlying areas of the country, and their enormous tasks and prodigious efforts are best exemplified by the great changes that took place in the Far North, where they encountered the most serious problems. Before the October Revolution, the 26 nationalities inhabiting vast territories in northern Siberia were isolated from the rest of the world and waged a bitter struggle for existence against the harsh climate and endless poverty. They were the most backward of Russia's national groups. They lived in yurtas (tents covered with animal skins), and many of them were nomads. Mainly engaged in reindeer-breeding, hunting, and fishing, even in the 20th Century they still used bows and arrows and stone implements. They suffered from trachoma, rheumatism, and tuberculosis; epidemics and famine constantly threatened to

wipe them out. Infant mortality was very high, and their life span rarely reached 40 years. Under the influence of shamans, they believed in good and evil spirits. Their social system was that of a primitive commune. They lived in tribes and knew nothing about agriculture, medical treatment, or the printed word. Less than one per cent of the northern peoples could read and write, and the nomadic population was totally illiterate. *Not a single northern nationality had a written language.*

In 1924 the Soviet government formed the Northern Committee headed by Pyotr Smidovich, Deputy Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to provide the northern peoples with food, medicine, hunting and fishing equipment, ammunition, and other necessities. Boarding schools, hospitals, trading stations, clubs, and training centers were built, and a committee of scholars was formed to create written languages for the northern nationalities.

Russian philologists and teachers who went to the Far North to study the local tongues had to travel with the tribes, live in the tents of the nomads, and suffer the bitter cold. Only after they had mastered the local languages were they able to construct written languages and prepare primers to use in teaching the local population. Because the people were nomads, every northern language had several dialects, and in some cases several primers and textbooks had to be prepared for one language.

The first teachers sent to the northern regions went to the Kola Peninsula to teach the Saami, to the Taimyr peninsula to teach the Nenets and Dolgans, to the regions along the River Ob to teach the Khanti and Mansi, to the Yenisei River area to teach the Evenks, and to the Chukotka Peninsula to teach the Chukchi and Eskimos. They traveled on dog sleds or in kayaks and brought with them the first books in the languages of these people printed in Leningrad. Gradually instruction, which for the past few years had been carried on in Russian with the aid of interpreters, was changed to the native tongue. In time the need for interpreters disappeared as the pupils, who were the children of local hunters, fishermen, and reindeer-breeders, became teachers themselves.

The first group of northerners — Chukchi, Nanai, Nentsi, Itelmens, Evenks — were sent as students to a special preparatory department of Leningrad University, and this was the beginning of the regular training of teachers for schools of the smaller northern nationalities. Later on the Institute of Peoples of the North was organized in Leningrad for higher education. Today northerners attend higher educational institutes in their own areas and in other regions of the Soviet Union, and their level of education and culture has reached the overall level of the rest of the population.

National autonomous regions that were established for all the northern peoples facilitated self-government and political activity among these formerly backward, oppressed minorities. The Koryaks and Evenks, Khanti and Nentsi, Dolgans and Chukchi still hunt, fish, and they breed reindeer like their ances-

tors, but they have also developed large industrial enterprises that produce diamonds, oil, natural gas, and atomic power for peaceful use.

Northern writers all tell about the way of life of their peoples, about the mentality of people living in a totally undeveloped society, about their reactions to socialism, and about the tremendous changes that have taken place in their part of Siberia. These are the writers to whom a comparatively short time ago the very concept of "school" was new, for whom the one familiar object in the whole school, according to Yuri Rytkeu, the first Chukchi writer, was the brass school bell taken from a reindeer's neck.

Today literacy is 100 per cent throughout the Far North. As everywhere in the USSR, the northern peoples have schools, clubs, and cultural centers, theaters, national music and dance groups, writers, teachers, artists, actors, and research workers active in their own branches of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

The smoke-filled yurtas have been replaced by settlements with houses, schools, hospitals, clubs, kindergartens, and libraries. People have telephones and watch TV broadcasts from Moscow transmitted through the Ekran Space System. Natives of the Far North are granted special educational privileges. Their children are given free accommodations at kindergartens, and pupils at boarding schools, the children of herdsmen out in the wilds, receive free food and clothing at state expense. Graduates of 10-year secondary schools have the privilege of entering higher educational institutes in the USSR without taking competitive examinations, and most of these students are fully supported by the state.

The Soviet Far North is now an important link in the country's economic network with its collective and state farms for reindeer-breeding, gold fields, mines, power stations, and gas and oil industries.

Developments In Central Asia

The Far North was only one of the outlying areas of the Soviet Union where the creation or simplification of written languages was the first step in wiping out illiteracy and making possible the industrial and cultural development of the entire country. Kazakhstan and the union republics of Central Asia — Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenia, and Kirghizia — where before 1917 less than two per cent of the population could read and write, moved from the era of Genghis Khan into modern civilization, bypassing capitalism. This vast area of the Soviet Union stretches from the Caspian Sea and borders on southern Siberia, the Mongolian People's Republic, China, Afghanistan, and Iran. Before the October Revolution, the people were mostly illiterate nomads living in yurtas or mud huts. There were no roads, no schools, no books, no medical services, no industries, nothing but taxes and slavery to the beys and emirs. Women were totally illiterate, living behind walls, veiled in yashmaks, and

sold as brides. They did the hardest work and owed total obedience to their husbands and other male relatives.

Special measures taken to eradicate illiteracy in Kazakhstan and Central Asia produced amazing results in a very short time. The simplification of written languages and the creation of new ones, literacy courses for adults, boarding and commune schools for children, training courses for teachers and other specialists at the first university in Central Asia established in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) in 1919, and an intensive campaign to induce parents to allow girls to attend school broke down cultural prejudices and reduced illiteracy.

Today there is total literacy in all of these republics. They have a huge network of specialized secondary and higher schools, universities, research institutes, branches of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, modern farms, a developed industry, power stations, complete medical services including helicopters for the treatment of shepherds in remote areas, opera houses, theaters, film studios, and hundreds of books written by their own world-famous authors, many of them in the newly created languages.

After an intense struggle fought against the legacy of the past, one of the greatest achievements of the cultural revolution in Soviet Asia was the liberation of women. In 1917 there were only two schoolgirls in Turkmenia; today women make up more than half of the students in the schools and are to be found in all fields of endeavor. They have equal rights with men, are deputies to the USSR Supreme Soviet and regional Soviets, hold posts in their local Councils of Ministers, and work as doctors, agronomists, teachers, school principals, writers, editors, production managers, trade union officials.

Multinational Soviet Literature

With the eradication of illiteracy came the organization and rapid growth of book publishing, the creation of a national press, and a tremendous increase in the number of newspapers and magazines printed in native languages. Periodicals in the Soviet Union are currently printed in 55 languages.

The unique multinational Soviet literature, social in outlook but diverse in method, style, and composition, thrives in 72 languages and reflects the life of the more than 100 nationalities of the country. Now more than half the works of fiction and poetry are written by non-Russians. Through translations into Russian and other Soviet languages, works by writers of the many Soviet nationalities are as familiar to readers in all parts of the Soviet Union as the works of Russian authors. Soviet literary magazines like *Novyi Mir*, published in the Russian language, and *Soviet Literature*, printed in Russian, English, French, German, Polish, and Spanish, regularly include the poetry and prose of writers from all the republics. *Soviet Literature* frequently devotes an entire issue to the works of writers belonging to a single Soviet nationality.

Famous writers from nationalities for whom written languages were created after the October Revolution include:

Chingiz Aitmatov, Kirghiz novelist, author of *Djamila*, *The First Teacher*, *Farewell*, *Gulsary*, *The White Steamer*, *A Day Lasting Longer Than a Century*.

Akhmedkhan Abu Bakar, Darghin poet and short story writer, author of *A Glow in the Sky*, *Darghin Girls*, *A Necklace for My Serminaz*.

Rasul Gamzatov, Avar poet and prose writer, author of many volumes of poetry, among them *Distant Stars*, *The Rosary of Years*, *Octaves*, and of the autobiography, *My Daghestan*.

Mustai Karim, Bashkir poet and revolutionary, journalist during World War II, author of volumes of poetry, *Flowers on Stone*, *Voices of Spring*, *Rivers Speak*, and stories for children.

Grigori Khodzher, Nanai fisherman, poet and short story writer, author of *The Sea Hawk*.

Semyon Kurilov, Yukaghir novelist, author of *Eaglet and Seagull*.

Antonina Kymytval, Chukchi poetess, whose songs are sung throughout the Soviet Union.

Yuri Rytkeu, the first writer in the Chukchi language, author of *People of the Northern Lights*, *The Drawing on the Walrus Tusk*, *The White Sail*.

Vladimir Sangi, son of a nomad, first poet and prose writer of the Nivkh people living on Sakhalin Island. Author of *The Blue Hills* and other stories.

Yuvan Shestalov, Mansi poet and prose writer, author of stories including *The Sun Cradled Me*, *The Blue Wind*, *Wonderland of the North*.

Salchak Toka, founder of Tuva prose style, author of *The Word of the Shepherd*, a chronicle of the life of the Tuva people before the Revolution and in the early years of the Civil War.

Russian and other world classics have been translated into the national languages of even the smallest of the Soviet nationalities. Alexander Pushkin would have been delighted to know that the prophecy in his poem, "Exegi monumentum," written in 1836 has come true:

The rumor of my fame will sweep through vasty Russia,
And all its peoples speak my name, whose light shall reign
Alike for haughty Slav, and Finn, and savage Tungus,
And Kalmyk of the plain.

(Translated by Babette Deutsch)

At the Fourth Congress of Soviet Writers in 1967, the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, winner of the Lenin International Peace Prize, spoke in the form of a lyrical appeal to Pushkin:

Dear Friend, today I wish to testify at this solemn Congress that for 50 years Soviet literature has been safeguarding your heritage and handing it down from generation to generation. While being profoundly national, its writers have been remarkably generous in respect of the cultures of other nations. The writers whom the Revolution has given to your country worked with the Soviet people to produce the buildings, the newsprint, and the printing presses until the book has become universally loved and respected as the hub of the new society. This has not been an easy task and was accomplished in a period of change and struggle unequalled in history. Soviet writers have been the heroes not only of their own people, but of human hope as well. . . . The invaders wanted to destroy your cities and your culture. The writers of the Soviet Union fought and died, fought and won, sacrificing their blood and their word, their love and their wrath to safeguard your crystal-clear heritage and the lofty humanism of the October Revolution. . . . Your brilliant heritage has been safeguarded and multiplied.... You have good reason to be satisfied, Comrade Pushkin. □

WILLIAM J. POMEROY

The Evenks: Affirmative Action in the USSR

Among the authorities on the national question in the Soviet Union is the son of a nomadic illiterate poor hunter who had tracked fur-bearing animals with primitive means across the frozen taiga and tundra of prerevolutionary Siberia. That son, V.N. Uvachan, born symbolically in 1917, the year of the October Revolution, is the holder of the doctorate degree, author and lecturer, and for over 20 years the first secretary of the area committee of the Communist Party in a huge section of Siberia. For many years he has also been a top-level adviser to the Chamber of Nationalities the the USSR Supreme Soviet and a leading member of the USSR Academy of Science's commission on problems of national relations.

V.N. Uvachan epitomizes the enormous progress made by his people in the years of Soviet power. He is an Evenk, a member of one of the small nationalities that are referred to collectively as "the peoples of the North" in the Soviet Union. There are 26 such nationalities in the vast regions stretching from Murmansk and the Kola Peninsula across the northern reaches of Siberia to Kamchatka and Sakhalin. Today the largest is barely 30,000 in number, the smallest with minute populations of a few hundred. Before the revolution all of them, including the Evenks, were literally on the verge of extinction, due to the combined effects of ruthless exploitation and neglect under tsarism.

When Siberia was formally incorporated into the Russian Empire in 1581, the Evenks (known then and until Soviet times as Tungus) were wholly a nomadic people with a scattered semi-patriarchal clan-based society, engaging in a primitive economy of hunting, fishing, trapping and reindeer breeding. Their thinly-populated territories extended over nearly two million square kilometers in north-central Siberia, in the basins of the northern extent of the Yenesei River and its tributaries like the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, the Podkamen-naya Tunguska, and the Angara Rivers.

In the first decade of the 17th century the Tungus were colonized and brought under a dual system of exploitation: on the one hand the tsarist state, represented by territorial governors, exacted a severe form of tribute known as the

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yasak, which was taken in furs of sable, ermine, foxes, squirrels and other small animals; on the other hand merchants conducted a robbery-like trade for the furs.

Through *yasak* alone 40,000 sables a year were extracted from the Yenesei North in the 17th and 18th centuries. To ensure the tribute, the Tungus were often beaten, killed or held hostage. The clan elders were made to collect the *yasak* and frequently were encouraged into corruption through collecting an extra share for themselves, fostering a rich and poor division made use of by the state.

The operations of the merchants were worse. A Russian visitor to the region in the 19th century wrote:

Procurers go to remote settlements and exchange gunpowder, lead, flour, tea, sugar, tobacco, fabrics, hardware, vodka and other necessities for furs. This barter is highly disadvantageous to the hunters. The procurers frequently encourage the population, particularly the natives, to drink. The latter are virtually held in bondage. The goods and vodka are of the lowest quality, and they are mostly advanced for the future gamebag. The bunters and trappers are always in debt, and their debts increase from year to year, even passing from one generation to another.

At the outset of Soviet power, before changes could be put into effect for the Evenks, Anempodist Sofronov, a poet from the larger Yakut nationality in eastern Siberia, travelled in the Evenk area and wrote of the extreme poverty he encountered:

The *urasa* [rude shelter] was extremely crowded. A small fire was kindled in the midst of it, on a four-cornered hearth of a tin box, with a tea kettle suspended over it. Having squeezed myself in with difficulty, I sat down on a log. To the left from the door an elderly Evenk woman was suckling a baby. Several children were warming themselves by the fire. The *urasa* was covered by a single cloth and was therefore translucent. Wind was freely blowing through the numerous holes and all the clothes and utensils inside were covered with snow. . . . The place could hardly be called a dwelling with the wind lashing through and the snow hitting the face and the clothes and with not even a semblance of warmth and comfort.

When I interviewed him, V.N. Uvachan told me of the effect of tsarist neglect and oppression:

In the period before the October Revolution, the Evenks were a dying people. They were still mostly nomadic, living in *chooms* (tents) that were portable, made of hides in winter, and of bark in summer. The *chooms* were dismal and damp, dark and smoky, so we lived and worked out of doors in all weathers. The insatiable quest for furs by the authorities and merchants had caused the near-extirpation of fur-bearing animals, which had ruined the primitive hunting economy. Reindeer breeding had become the more prominent occupation, but this had led to the beginnings of class society due to the influence of Russian capitalist relations and money economy.

Private ownership of herds had begun to replace communal ownership, and the

emergence of some rich families tended to make the family the basic unit of Evenk society instead of the clan. Some families had 8,000 to 10,000 head of reindeer, and hired others in the clan to tend them. There was even a seizure of the best land. This was not yet the dominant feature among the Evenks, but it was the growing one, favored by the Russians because they could ally the rich to exploit the rest of us.

In general, the Evenks were oppressed by a colonial policy that kept them in extreme economic, political and cultural backwardness. Prior to the Revolution there was not a single literate person among the Evenks. They had no written language, no alphabet. Even most of our native names had been replaced by Russian names, as a result of the imposition of Christianity and baptism that accompanied conquest.

There were a number of instances of revolt by the Evenks against Russian rule. A remembered revolt was led by Vauli Nenyang in 1825-41 against tsarist officials and the local rich. Demands of the rebels were mainly for lower commodity prices and higher prices for furs. The revolt was ruthlessly suppressed. It was symptomatic of Evenk feeling which by the time of the Revolution was one of deep distrust if not hatred of Russian officials and merchants.

The October 1917 Revolution was transmitted to the Yenesei regions, and reached the Evenks, through the many Bolshevik exiles sent there as political prisoners by the tsarist regime. They established Soviets in the main centers, principally in Krasnoyarsk and Turukhansk. Bolsheviks from the new Soviets journeyed widely to bring the news of the revolution to the remote settlements of Evenks and other small nationalities. To these it was proclaimed that the 1822 Regulations for the Administration of Non-Russians were abolished with all powers they had given to officials, merchants and local exploiters like the Evenk princes and shamans, and that the peoples of the North were given full rights with all other nationalities. The Soviet power's Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia was proclaimed to the Evenks and others.

Unfortunately the implementation of this decree was interrupted by two developments. First, most of the Bolsheviks left their place of exile to return home to participate in establishing Soviet power, and the Soviets in the Yenesei areas were taken over by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who were less concerned with minority rights. This was followed by the seizure of power in all of Siberia by the forces of counterrevolution under the Whiteguardist Admiral Kolchak, marked in the Yenesei region by the fall of the Krasnoyarsk Soviet on June 18, 1918.

The Kolchak regime, which Lenin characterized as "the dictatorship of the very worst exploiters, a plunderous dictatorship of landowners and capitalists which was worse than that of the tsar," had disastrous consequences for the Evenks and other small peoples. Their economy was utterly ruined: the *yasak* was doubled; guns and ammunition, traps and facilities were cut off from the hunters and fishermen; necessary commodities were tripled in price; frequently furs were paid for with vodka. The best hunters were dragooned into the

counterrevolutionary army.

In the 18 months of Kolchak's iron-fisted domination, all of populated Siberia was devastated. The Evenks were left prostrate, in a condition of near-starvation and helplessness. When Soviet power was restored in the Yenesei North at the beginning of 1920, implementation of the decree on the rights of peoples had to start in the worst of circumstances. Not only was Evenk society near collapse, but the people's distrust of Russians, built up over centuries, was magnified by the brutal behavior of Kolchak's regime.

However, the Soviet government's Council of People's Commissars, presided over by Lenin, had been working out the correct approach to the numerous small non-Russian nationalities during the course of the struggle against counterrevolution. On August 14, 1919, in an Appeal to the Workers, Peasants, Non-Russians and Tiling Cossacks of Siberia, intended to mobilize the people against Kolchak, a section stated:

In respect to the non-Russian population of Siberia, the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia which gives all nations the right to determine their future themselves is reaffirmed. . . . The lands actually used by non-Russians shall not be further limited or cut in any way, they shall be put at their complete public disposal. If there be any shortage of land for the non-Russians and if there be free land funds in the adjacent neighborhood, the latter shall be allotted to the non-Russians.

One of the first resolutions adopted after the expelling of Kolchak's forces from the Yenesei region was on practical measures for providing the Evenks and others with food supplies and hunting equipment. A network of cooperative trading posts was set up, where prices of both commodities and furs were fixed in accord with a balanced system of units for exchange.

The theoretical basis for policy toward the small nationalities that were in a precapitalist stage virtually of primitive communism was elaborated by Lenin in an address to the Second Congress of the Comintern in July 1920:

Are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation . . . ? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal — in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development.

This process, however, could not be hurried in the case of peoples like the Evenks, for whom the question literally of national salvation had first to be solved. Steps to stabilize the Evenk economy, to restore it just to its natural state, had to be undertaken. A People's Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities was created in the central Soviet government, which had a Department of National Minorities designed to shape policy for the peoples of the North, among others.

"A number of urgent steps were mapped out," said V.N. Uvachan, "to protect non-Russians from any form of exploitation; to ensure them against extinction; to regulate the use of pastures, hunting and fishing grounds; to protect native industries and game reserves; to improve the economic position of non-Russians and enlist them in the general cause of Soviet Russia for building socialism with due regard for the specific conditions of their life."

Conditions of life for the Evenks remained precarious up to the end of 1923. They were adversely affected by the New Economic Policy (NEP) period, during which avaricious merchants were able to revive and to swindle them until finally checked. The Soviet government through the Siberian Department for Nationalities countered the nefarious activities of merchants by organizing individual commodity exchange with the native peoples. In 1920-22 over two million rubles worth of food and manufactured goods were channeled to the peoples of the North — flour, salt, sugar, tobacco, kerosene, fabrics, rifles, gunpowder, shot. Much of this was sold to the peoples on credit, which amounted to 477,000 rubles in 1921 alone; eventually all the credits were written off.

By 1924 it was felt possible to advance further in developing the participation of the small nationalities in Soviet society. A Committee for Assisting Peoples of the Northern Border Area was set up under the Presidium of the All-Union Central Executive Committee. It was known as the Committee for the North, for short. The deputy chairman of the Presidium, P.G. Smidovich, later wrote: "We were given the very difficult but absorbing task of attracting to Soviet power and socialist culture peoples whose development lagged behind not merely by centuries but by thousands of years." He said that it would have been easy to restrict the Committee's activities merely to assistance, but that philanthropy was alien to Sovietization. "The task was of a different nature, it was deeper, more difficult and exhaustive. The Committee was an organ for assisting the small nationalities in the North to build socialism." Under the Committee's guidance, all that was subsequently done was by the native peoples themselves.

To begin with, there were enormous problems to overcome. The Evenks were scattered in small clan groups over a vast area, without communications, very far from settled communities. There were virtually no cadres among them who were capable of being drawn into administrative roles. The literacy rate in 1924, according to V.N. Uvachan, was still only 0.7 per cent.

In that year, out of 12 schools in the large Turukhansk Territory, three were opened for non-Russians. Each had a teacher and 10 pupils, only part of whom were Evenks. The first school just for Evenks was opened somewhat later, at Yerbogachen (today included in the Irkutsk District). Among the first five Evenks who graduated with school certificates was V.N. Uvachan.

Three Simultaneous Lines of Development

The development of the peoples of the North proceeded simultaneously along three lines: cultural, including the eradication of illiteracy and the training of cadres; political, beginning with the introduction of Soviets; and economic, involving the leap from primitive natural economy to socialism. This development was achieved within a decade and a half, one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of the Soviet Union and its multinational peoples.

The bringing of literacy to the Evenks was not achieved without obstacles. Enlightenment for the working people was opposed by the rich elements who had been dominant and by the *shamans* (primitive priests). There were a number of cases of schools being burned by these exploiters; in one case in 1936, in the settlement of Baikit, the burning of a school caused the death of 26 Evenk children. Such episodes were but one aspect of the class struggle features of the emancipation of the Evenks.

Another adaptation to nomadic life was the establishment of "cultural bases" in the North. The idea for this came from a resolution of the Committee on the North in 1925, which said that "the organization of cultural centers is the most expedient and rational method of work for promoting culture, developing initiative, elaborating the principle of national self-determination, drawing the native tribes into building the Soviet society, and rendering immediate economic and cultural aid to the local inhabitants."

The Evenks themselves determined where the first cultural base would be built. At a general clan assembly in Chirinda trade post in 1926, a resolution was adopted that declared: "We all want a town to be built at the mouth of the Tura. . . . We shall send our children to the school and keep them there as long as possible."

In October 1927 the Tura cultural base, the first in the Soviet Union, was formally opened. It had a boarding school with eight Evenk children for its opening class, a hospital, an outpatient clinic, a tuberculosis dispensary, a veterinary clinic with a bacteriological laboratory, a club and clubhouse, and a bathhouse with a laundry. At the clubhouse on November 7, 1927, at least 20 Evenks for the first time took part in a celebration of the October Revolution. A circle for Evenk women was opened, where medical personnel gave lectures on subjects of hygiene, medicine and political matters. Reindeer were brought by herdsman to the veterinary clinic to cure them of epizootic diseases like scabies.

Tura expanded as a cultural and educational center, and today is the administrative as well as cultural center for the Evenk National Area. Other cultural bases followed for other small nationalities: by 1934 there were 13 in various regions of the North.

In addition to the cultural bases, a network of libraries, reading rooms, and clubs combined with cinema-showing facilities were set up in the districts.

There were known as "red *chooms*," and they were basically dispensers of socialist culture. The first "red *choom*" was opened in the Turukhansk district in 1929, and within a year there were five "red *chooms*," four cottage reading rooms and a portable cinema unit in the Yenesei North.

Political development of the Evenks proceeded hand-in-hand with that of culture. For the first few years of Soviet power the tribal-clan structure of Evenk society remained unchanged while the territorial and district organs of government and administration were set up and staffed by Russians and other large nationalities who lived in the towns and villages, especially on the Yenesei River and its large tributaries. The Evenks and others were invited, however, to send delegates to a conference on the peoples of the North, held in Omsk in March 1921, where they were encouraged to present their needs and to discuss the administrative and social system. It was at this conference that the fixing of prices on commodities and furs, in favor of the native peoples, was decided. Other similar conferences followed, creating confidence in the peoples that the Soviet government was their friend.

At the beginning of 1923 steps were taken to establish the first Soviets among the Northern peoples. The first Evenk Soviets were organized along the clan principle, i.e. "in conformity with local conditions," as the Yenesei Committee resolution put it. The huge region was divided into four districts, with an inspector appointed for each with the task of contacting the nomadic clans and assembling them to elect Soviets. Outstanding Communists were selected as the inspectors, who had to travel vast distances in winter, through blizzards and over frozen rivers and swamps, on foot or sledge, to reach the nomads. It was not even known how many clans there were or where they hunted and herded reindeer. Meetings assembled with difficulty varied greatly in size — 17, 10, 64, 29, 7. Sometimes decimated clans were encouraged to join with another to form a Soviet.

Although in some cases existing princes in the clans were elected to the Soviets (some of the princes wholeheartedly embraced the new Soviet system), the message carried to the nomads was that the Soviet government was a government of the working people and that the right of working people to run their own affairs would be protected. Tasks set for the Soviets were simple, a common one being the establishment of reindeer herds under Soviet control to be used for aiding poor families in the clan. For example, in January 1924 the newly-established Ilimpia clan Soviet in the Chirinda district distributed 500 head of reindeer among poor Evenk families; the deer had been expropriated from rich owners of large herds by the Soviet.

The principle put into operation in the Evenk Soviets had been laid down in the decisions of the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in March 1921:

The first steps in the policy of class differentiation in eastern border areas must be the isolation of all native exploiter elements from influencing the masses, the struggle against them to be waged by all organs of Soviet self-government, and the abrogation of all class privileges to be enacted by the self-organization of native masses into Soviets of the working people.

Establishment and functioning of Soviets among the scattered primitive people was not all smooth going. It took patient, persistent effort to encourage them to assume the direction of and building of their own interests. Many difficulties, mistakes, setbacks and conflicts arose and had to be overcome, but gradually the Soviets took on the tasks of eradicating the old, harmful customs and traditions, such as wife-purchase.

By 1927 there were 36 clan Soviets in the Yencsei North, of which 18 were Evenk. As V.N. Uvachan related, "By that time, the political activity of the people had considerably increased. They were already voicing demands for the establishment of district Soviets." The cause of these demands lay in the rapid realization that the centralizing or drawing together made possible the setting up of schools, hospitals, clinics, veterinary stations and other facilities.

In July 1927 the Baikit district was formed, in the basin of the Podkamennaya Tunguska River. It embraced five Evenk clans, comprising 329 households of 1,851 people. The Soviets of the five clans elected the district Soviet. At that time the clan Soviets had a total of 42 members (of whom only 14 could read). As the district became established, other nomadic clans moved into it; there were eight clans by 1929, when the first Congress of Soviets was held in the Baikit district, with 17 delegates.

At that Congress the class character of the Soviet process that had been welcomed by the Evenks was evidenced in the discussion and decisions. One decision forbade the rich owners to employ workers. A delegate assailed the efforts of the rich to oppose the Soviets on grounds that "the poor cannot govern the people and therefore it is necessary to elect the rich to the Soviets." When elections to the clan Soviet took place in 1929 there were no rich among the elected members: of the 48 members, 35 came from poor families and 13 from those of middle status.

The development from the clan to the district Soviet was a highly significant step. In essence it meant the beginning of the transition from clan to territorial-economic organization, and from clan to national consciousness. It was a step that opened the way to national statehood for the peoples of the North, the climax of what was in actuality a process of national emancipation.

This process took place so rapidly that by the beginning of 1929 calls were coming from some of the small nationalities for their national rights to be formalized. The Nentsi people, in northwest Siberia, at the 9th Congress of their Soviets in January 1929, adopted a resolution saying, "We the Nentsi ask for full national rights as decreed by Lenin," and urging the establishment of

their own national area. In response to this demand, a Nenets National Area was created in July 1929.

It was a step that quickly proved its viability. Within a year the national area showed that by concentrating cadre who were familiar with local conditions in one place and by bringing local organs of power closer to the people, favorable conditions for political, economic and cultural growth could exist, and the national consolidation of tribes and clans that had been set apart by differences could be enhanced.

Therefore, on December 10, 1930 a decree "On the Organization of National Associations in the Districts Inhabited by the Small Peoples of the North" was issued by the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. It established eight national areas and eight national districts (in addition to the Nenets National Area); subsequently another national area was created, making ten all told in the Soviet Union today.

Among those established by the December 1930 decree was the Evenk National Area, which was ceremonially initiated on July 25, 1931 at the Tura cultural center. It coincided with the holding of the First Congress of Evenk Soviets, which elected an area executive committee of 18 members and seven alternate members, drawn from district committees, clan Soviets, cooperative associations, and the embryonic Evenk area Communist Party.

The Evenk National Area

The Evenk National Area, which remains in being today as established 52 years ago, covers an irregularly-shaped region roughly 500 miles in width, east to west, and 700 miles long, north to south. Its population, then relatively small, had a composition indicated by the 43 delegates who attended the First Congress of Soviets: 29 Evenks, 10 Russians, and four Yakuts. In 1936 the population totalled 6,485 people, of whom 3,638 were Evenks, 712 Yakuts, and the rest mostly Russian. The National Area was divided into three districts and 18 nomad Soviets.

The administrative divisions in Siberia were more or less permanently arrived at in a decree of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in December 1934. Among other delineations, this decree set up the huge Krasnoyarsk Territory, the largest Territory in the Soviet Union, which was made to include the Evenk National Area, the Taimyr National Area and the Turukhansk District. Within this territorial arrangement, the Evenk National Area has autonomy.

Establishment of the Evenk National Area and its area and district committees was not a mere formality, or drawing of lines on maps. It was associated with a growth and intensification of political activity on the part of this people who had not previously known such an activity in their way of life. Elections to

the Soviets drew great interest which became intense as they embodied the struggle for the curtailment and ending of the power of the few rich and the shamans.

A significant feature of political activity was the new role of the women, who had been wholly subordinated to the men in the old patriarchal clan society. One of the first Evenk Communists was a woman, Tatiana Uvachan, who, as a delegate to the Territorial Congress of the Soviets of Eastern Siberia held in Irkutsk in February 1931, was elected to the East Siberian Territorial Executive Committee. By 1934 one-fourth of the deputies elected to the nomad Soviets in the Evenk National Area were women. In the local Soviet elections of 1939, 75 of the 299 deputies elected were women.

V.N. Uvachan told of an event that took place during the elections to the Evenk Soviets in 1931:

During a meeting of Evenks of the Strelkovsky nomad Soviet, Olga Yastrikova objected to the candidature of the former chairman of the clan Soviet because of his coarse treatment of the people. The meeting agreed with Yastrikova and refused to elect the man. It was a really extraordinary event: only a brief interval before, men did not allow women to attend their meetings, and regarded them as inferiors, but on this occasion they not only heard a woman's arguments, but even agreed with her.

The Evenk people participated with great interest in the discussion on the draft of the Constitution of the USSR that was submitted to the Soviet population in 1936. That Constitution extended to each national area the right to elect a deputy to the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet, regardless of the size of the area's population. In the elections to the Supreme Soviet on December 12, 1937, the Evenks elected one of their people, A.D. Davidkin, to the Soviet of Nationalities. (In 1950, 1962, 1966 and 1970, V.N. Uvachan was elected deputy for the Evenk National Area to the Supreme Soviet.)

(Under the principle of national equality in the Soviet Union, a member of any nationality can be elected to any post in each of the republics, autonomous areas and national areas. Thus an Evenk can be a candidate in whatever part of the Soviet Union he may live, and a Russian, a Ukrainian, an Uzbek or an Armenian can be elected to a Soviet in the Evenk National Area if he or she happens to live there.)

Political and cultural development of the Evenk people, and their Sovietization, were underpinned by their economic development, which was encouraged to proceed along socialist lines.

During the first few years after the restoration of Soviet power in Siberia, the main attention was given to stabilizing the economy of the small peoples that had been ruined by the Kolchak depredations. The simple provision of food was essential, and depots for flour, salt, sugar and other needs were established. At this time, however, and well into the 1920s, the private trader was dominant,

robbing the poor Evenks who were the vast majority in the clans. To prevent this, trading cooperatives were set up which gradually ousted the private merchant, while liberal credits were extended to the poor.

The Soviet government did not merely have the aim of rehabilitating the former economic conditions of the Evenks and others, but had the perspective of reorganizing their economy along socialist lines. Cooperatives were the initial means of doing this. The trading cooperative had been expanded by 1927 into the integrated cooperative that combined supply, marketing and production functions. These were organized for hunting, fishing and reindeer breeding. Squeezing out of the private merchant was reflected in the expanding network of shops for the peoples of the North: between 1927 and 1930 a total of 389 cooperative trading establishments were set up in the North, but by 1934 these had increased to 869. In 1928 there were 60,000 members in the cooperative movement among the small peoples; by 1932 there were 125,000 members, which was the great majority of the population.

Collectivization was developed among the small nationalities step by step, with consideration being given to the peculiarities of social structure such as the clan system: the early co-ops were organized on a clan basis. The process from co-ops to simple production associations (in which members continued to own their means of production like rifles, nets, and reindeer) to collective farms was accomplished within 15 years, a relatively rapid change for a primitive society.

Special consideration was given not only to native relations and customs in applying decrees on cooperatives, but also to the traditional production. Evenk hunters were excluded from some of the provisions in measures like the decision adopted by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, "On Rules for Hunting, Its Seasons and Methods," which was designed for the entire Soviet Union and said that "fur-bearing and other valuable animals are the property of the state and that hunting is a state-economic planned activity." Evenks and other small peoples did not have age limitations for hunting as in the rest of the country, nor did they require hunting licenses or have to pay hunters' dues.

Some theorists of the collectivization process advanced the idea that the peoples of the North were in the primitive communal state that was very close to socialist relations, and that a class struggle would not be necessary in order to achieve mass collectivization. This, however, was not an accurate picture of what existed among the Evenks and their fellow groups. Class differentiation had been developing in the Evenk clans for at least half a century before the October Revolution and it tended to increase during the early years of Soviet power before serious attention could be given to them. The chief activity where this occurred was reindeer ownership and breeding.

The census of 1926-27 revealed that in the Far North 3.2 per cent of families owned 42.7 per cent of the reindeer. In the Evenk National Area in 1931-32

kulaks who were 8.3 per cent of the population owned 73.5 per cent of reindeer while the poor and middle sectors who were 91.7 per cent of the population owned but 26.5 per cent. There was an Evenk saying: "He who owns the reindeer owns the tundra." He also dominated the clan; poor Evenks had to hire themselves out to take care of the herds of the owners. In truth, the rich owners were exploiting the clan and patriarchal structure for their own purposes. Hunting and fishing were affected in the same way; the best hunting and fishing grounds were usurped by the rich, who had innumerable traps and nets which were tended by the poor Evenks.

Forms of class struggle to change this situation took place in a number of ways. In the early years of Soviet power the state gave deliberate assistance to the poor Evenks to enable them to increase their reindeer herds. Between 1926 and 1931 the herds of the poor increased by 45.5 per cent through state aid, those of middle strata rising by 5.3 per cent in contrast, the rich were not similarly aided. The clan Soviets at an early stage adopted decisions that barred the rich from hiring workers who could be exploited. Herds had to be tended by an owner and his family, the use of hired labor gradually being eliminated.

One of the major steps to develop socialist relations, initiated and guided by the Committee of the North in 1931, was the land-and-water management scheme, which turned pasturelands and hunting and fishing grounds over to the simple production association and then to the collective farms by 1934. The rich were drastically curtailed; they were given land but only as much as they could utilize by their personal labor. It was not necessary to seize property such as reindeer herds to eradicate exploitation.

Collectivization

Collectivization of the Evenk economy was put in motion at roughly the same time that collective farms were introduced on a large scale in the rest of Soviet Union. The grounds had already been laid for the step with the developing of cooperatives and simple production associations. A question might be raised as to whether this was not an artificial implanting of the socialist stage on Evenk society. In fact, the primitive clan society was a phenomenon caused by an extremely low level of technological development in which peoples were dependent on the forces of nature, whereas collectivization was made possible by the bringing of the Evenks into close relations with advanced large-scale industry and science, a much higher stage of technology and productive capacity. The ease with which the Evenks were able to make the leap from a primitive society and production relations to socialism was made possible by the enormous assistance and protection from Soviet society as a whole.

In 1931 collectivization embraced only 4 per cent of Evenk households in the Evenk National Area. By 1941 it was virtually complete. Socialist production

of furs by Evenks developed in parallel to this as collective farms and socialist production-hunting stations were set up. This socialist sector accounted for 63.4 per cent of furs by 1935, and for 98.5 per cent in 1940. The kulak hold on furs had dropped to a mere 1 per cent in 1936, and to zero in 1937.

In the early artel form of collective farm the members still retained ownership of reindeer or of tools, and just pooled their possessions for collective production. By 1940, however, the principle of socialist ownership had been fully accepted and implemented. The main reason for this comparatively ready acceptance may be seen in the greatly raised incomes and well-being that collectivization brought. In the Evenk National Area the gross income of collective farms rose from 895,300 rubles in 1935 to 5 million rubles in 1940, while in the same period the income of individual collective farm households jumped from 1,616 rubles to 4,500 rubles.

During this decisive decade of collectivization, which was interwoven with cultural and educational advancement and intensive political activity in Sovietization, the life of the Evenk people underwent great transformation. The transition from nomadic to settled circumstances took place as collective farms were set up, and primitive nomads developed into what amounted to a new class of collective farm peasantry. Hostility and distrust that were common between clans were eliminated, and Evenk nationhood began to emerge. The hardship and poverty, disease and superstitious fears of the recent past were vanquished; to Evenks it was vividly clear that Soviet power and collectivization were responsible.

By 1940, in less than two decades, the Evenk people made the tremendous stride from a backward hunting and fishing stage to socialism. The socialist foundation for development of the Evenk National Area had been completed by then. Since then, all that has occurred has been an expansion of the features and the productive forces set in motion in that period.

The Evenk National Area today is on the threshold of large-scale economic development, as part of the planned development of Siberia. By the mid-1970s over 2,000 deposits of minerals had been discovered on Evenk territory, and their extraction and processing will contribute immensely to Evenk well-being. The largest hydropower station in the world is on the drawing boards for Turukhansk, on the Nizhnyaya Tunguska River near the northwest corner of the Evenk area, a 10 to 12 million kw station that would bring electrification and industry to most of that area. "Electricity," said V.N. Uvachan, "will oust the polar night and change the face of the North."

Already in 1969, the leader of a team of reindeer breeders from a collective farm in the North could tell the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers, meeting in Moscow:

The small nations of the Soviet North have been reinvigorated by the Leninist

nationalities policy. During the years of Soviet power a genuine revolution in the mode of life of the former nomads — reindeer breeders and fishermen — has occurred. From smoky *chooms*, *yurts* and tents to comfortable houses, from the dim oil lantern to the electric lamp, from illiteracy and ignorance to radio and television, from the dog sledges to powerful tractors, cars and airplanes — such is the progress made by our people.

A Soviet writer, N. Kharitonov, visited in November 1980 the same Evenk district described by the poet Anempodist Sofronov and quoted in the early part of this article. He found 100 Evenk families living in a well-constructed village:

The former out-of-the-way nomads' camp has become today a modern village inhabited by celebrated reindeer-breeders and hunters. Many new buildings have appeared here: a creche-kindergarten complex, an eight-year school, and a boarding school. A new standard shop is under construction, there are a village House of Culture and a hospital. The villagers can watch Central TV Studio programs. The Zhigansky state farm keeps a herd of cows for the needs of the local population; the workers also have them in their possession. It is gratifying that the young love their village and stay here. They are mainly people with secondary education.

Not a trace has remained of such dwellings as the *urasa* and *tordokh*, which were described by A. Sofronov. At distant pastures the Zhigansky state farm has built in this five-year plan period way bases, where the reindeer breeders have at their disposal new houses, baths and recreation rooms.

When I talked with V.N. Uvachan he told me: "Before 1917, we were a dying people, near extinction. Since then, like most of the other peoples of the North, the Evenks have grown in number by over five times. Today we have a high birth rate, 20 to 24 per 1,000. In Siberia as a whole there are more than 25,000 Evenks."

Although the population of the Evenk National Area has grown considerably as its economic potential has begun to be realized, with 26 nationalities now represented in it, the majority are still Evenks. In 1970, out of 451 deputies elected to Soviets, 320 were from the native peoples, chiefly Evenks with some Yakuts.

The level of education in this population is impressive. Among the Evenks, 589 per 1,000 had higher or secondary education in 1970. More remarkable is the national intelligentsia that has developed among this small people (and among far smaller peoples of the North). By the 1930s Evenk novelists and poets had emerged and were being published widely in the Soviet Union. The first Evenk writer, Nikolay Tarabukin, wrote autobiographical novels about the hard way of life of nomads in the taiga in the past and the great changes brought by the Revolution. The Evenk novel, *Red Suglan* (Red Festival), by Nikita Sakharov, written in the 1930s, was about the organizing of the collective farms. A stream of creative Evenk writers has appeared since then: M.I. Bublichenko, K.I. Voronina, A.A. Kurkogir, A.G. Lukinov. One of the most popular today is the poet, Alitet Nemtushkin, writing in Evenk and translated

extensively in Russian.

Nor are the prerevolutionary oral traditions being neglected. In January 1983 the Siberian Branch and Far Eastern Research Center of the USSR Academy of Sciences announced that they were compiling a 6-volume series under the general title, *Folk Monuments of the Peoples of Siberia and the Far East*, the first group of volumes to be published by 1985. This will bring together the epic poems, myths, fairy tales, legends, ritual and non-ritual songs, and lyrics of all the peoples of the North. A large section will be devoted to the folklore and expression of the Evenks.

Such steps by the Soviet state and its institutions to open the doors of Soviet socialist culture for the artistic creations of the Evenks and other small nationalities is the cultural facet of the integration of these peoples with the whole of Soviet society. As one of the Soviet family of peoples, the Evenk nationality has been assisted to draw level in its development with all the other nationalities, large and small. Integration on the basis of equality has been the most powerful factor in that process.

V.N. Uvachan stressed to me that "the best customs and traditions of work and life" of the Evenks have been carefully preserved in that development and integration. He was firm in pointing out, however, that his people's experience, including his own, had taught this lesson:

These forms should be brought into conformity with the new, socialist content. This would mean the continuity and development of the best customs and traditions in new, socialist conditions. We must not fear any loss of "national originality." Any attempt to preserve "national originality" at all costs leads to national narrow-mindedness, isolation from the world communist civilization and, finally, stagnation for the sake of retaining archaic national modes of life. Such an attempt would inevitably lead to the preaching of national seclusion.

This outstanding Evenk summed up the significance of his people's development under Soviet power:

Above all, our history since 1917 has been a glowing example of the principle of non-capitalist development, the importance of which was first pointed to by Lenin. We were able to make the tremendous leap from a primitive, backward state to socialism. Our case is proof that the non-capitalist way is a very powerful weapon for backward nationalities. In the Soviet Union, it solved the problems of development for Central Asia and for all the small nationalities of Siberia. □

Notes

The main sources for the contents of this article are:

1. Interview with V.N. Uvachan, April 1977.
2. V.N. Uvachan, *The Peoples of the North and Their Road to Socialism*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975.

3. *Unity: Collected Articles on Multi-National Soviet Literature*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975.

4. *Soviet Literature*, No. 1, 1976 (issue devoted to literature and arts of the peoples of the North).

5. N. Kharitonov, "The Evenks' Happy Star," *Socialist Yakutia*, November 7, 1980.

6. "Soviet Far East: Unique Literary Initiative," *Soviet Culture*, January 6, 1983.

EDUARD BAGRAMOV

The Soviet People: A New Historical Community

The building of a new society in the multinational Soviet state has resulted in the appearance of a new social international community — *the Soviet people*.

From the social and economic, political and cultural points of view what in fact are the Soviet people? How do they differ from multinational formations in capitalist states? Does it mean that with the molding of this international community the national communities will disappear?

Types and Forms of Communities

In their works on national relations in the USSR Western sovietologists have put forward the view that Soviet people are a myth invented to camouflage the policy of forceful Russification and the knocking together of a single nation of the "Soviet Russian type" to replace the numerous nationalities. But this is merely an attempt to project into socialist society the relations of domination and subordination inherent in capitalism.

That socialism has given rise to new communities is a natural development. In the early years of Soviet rule, during the Civil War and the period of foreign military intervention, the need to defend the achievements of the socialist revolution welded the working class and peasants together and helped rally all the nations and nationalities of Russia into a single family.

There have been various types of communities in history. They can be divided into several groups. There have been natural historical communities linked by a common origin and marked by external features and tokens passed down from one generation to another. There have been social historical communities, such as the clan, tribe, nationality and nation. In antagonistic societies there are social classes and groups which differ considerably and even oppose one another, such as the class of proletarians and the class of capitalists in bourgeois nations. Finally, there have been unions of various peoples within

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the framework of a single state. There were many such instances even in ancient times. But the earlier forms of exploiting states and the modern imperialist states with their colonial or semi-colonial possessions and dependencies represent conglomerates of peoples who have been forcefully united.

In antagonistic class formations there have never been strong and stable voluntary associations of peoples or socially welded nations. As a rule, in antagonistic formations inter-ethnic associations have always been weak and shortlived and disintegrated when put to a serious test. This is shown by many examples, from the despotic Oriental empires to the capitalist "patchwork" of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Tsarist Russia united dozens of peoples within its state. But they could hardly have been referred to as a "Russian people," because they were disunited and the small peoples were subjected to social and national oppression. Lenin wrote with anguish about the masses of toilers of various nationalities being alienated from one another, because such alienation hampered the struggle against the tsarist autocracy. Nor is there any "peace between nationalities" under capitalism today. Eloquent proof of this are the unending conflicts which stem from national antagonism in Northern Ireland, Canada, Belgium and Spain.

Under capitalism the division of nations into antagonistic classes and the disunity of nations and nationalities and of social groups and individuals they are made up of stem from the very nature of the system.

The Soviet Union is a fundamentally different state. There has not yet been in history such a strong and stable association of all classes, social groups, nations and nationalities as the Soviet people. The *political basis* of this unity is the Soviet system, the united multinational socialist state. Its *economic basis* is the unified national economy founded on socialist ownership and planned management which help make the most rational use of natural resources and achieve the most advantageous division of labor between the republics in the interests of all the peoples. Marxist-Leninist ideology forms the *ideological basis* of the inviolable unity of the socialist nations.

The new 1977 Constitution of the USSR consistently strengthens the federal elements of the Soviet state. Article 13 of the 1936 Constitution defined the USSR as a federal state based on the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics. Article 70 of the new Constitution refers to the USSR as an *integral*, federal, multinational state formed on the principle of socialist federalism, of the voluntary association of equal socialist republics, which embodies the *state unity of the Soviet people*. This graphically reflects the further strengthening of the internationalist elements and emphasizes the Leninist principle of the self-determination of nations, which played an outstanding role in building up the multinational Soviet state.

The principle of internationalism, which forms the foundation of the USSR's national-state system, is manifested not only in its consistent policy of

strengthening the federal elements. As the nations and nationalities are drawn closer and closer together this process gives a new internationalist content to national statehood. The internationalism of the federal state, regardless of form, has consisted and continues to consist in the fact that this state expresses the interests of all nations, of the working people of all the nationalities dwelling in the country.

Political and Theoretical Importance of the Concept "Soviet People"

The concept of Soviet people, as a social and international community, reflects, above all, a definite result of natural processes in socialist development. The notion "Soviet people" is of political and theoretical importance. The political aspect is manifested in that this notion enables Soviet citizens of various nationalities to find a country-wide approach to their problems and tasks, to realize more deeply their involvement in the efforts and plans of the whole people, to gain a deeper understanding of the laws that govern the development of the single Soviet culture which has a socialist common content, but varied national forms.

The emergence and development of the Soviet people as a new historical community make it possible to explain theoretically and gain a clearer idea of the interpenetrating processes in national and international development for a long time ahead, when other national communities shall grow into international communities on a broader scale. The notion of "Soviet people" has actually filled a gap in Marxist literature. In the past it failed to deal with the question of how mankind, having achieved the flourishing of separate socialist nations, will proceed to a merger of nations, with national distinctions gradually withering away.

Otto Bauer, ideologist of "Austro-Marxism," thought that nations would differentiate more and more as progress was made in building socialism, that national distinctions would become increasingly marked. This was, beyond doubt, a nationalist interpretation.

But one may ask: "If Soviet Marxists reject this standpoint, why do they advocate the flowering of socialist nations?" Flowering does, after all, imply the strengthening of national features and the development of national elements. But this is only a seeming contradiction. It is important to realize that the term "national" does not mean solely the specific features of a nation. It also includes the common elements the nations produce in their fight for common ideals. It is inseparably linked with international elements, in this case elements that are characteristic of the Soviet people in general.

Features which do not depend on social and national distinctions have become more pronounced in the life of the Soviet people, in their behavior,

character and attitude towards their public duty. In addition to their national feelings they have acquired a sense of pride for the whole of the Soviet people, a sense of pride in their contribution to the efforts of the entire Soviet people, which is becoming increasingly manifest in their thinking and behavior. These features are common to all Soviet people — the members of the new historical community. Of course, the emergence and development of this community does not mean that the national distinctions will wither away at the present stage. The Soviet state is opposed to accelerating these processes. Yet, it is equally opposed to the perpetuation of national partitions. The flowering of nations and their gradual drawing closer together constitute the two leading interlinked trends in the development of national relations, *two aspects of a dialectical process leading to further multi-nationalization of social life.*

A corollary of this will be a new understanding of such notions as "Soviet character" and "national character." In the past national character was defined as a sum total of the features distinguishing one nation from another. National character does indeed include features that distinguish a given nation from another nation. But these distinctive features are acquiring more and more common traits.

The notion of "Soviet people" conveys an idea of the direction of further development of nations and nationalities. Marxists, of course, have in mind the ultimate aim of the development of mankind, namely, the merging of all nations into a single family embracing the whole of mankind. The emergence and development of the Soviet people have shown that multi-nationalization of public life at a definite, though prolonged stage, does not at all obliterate national distinctions. They are retained, but the nations and nationalities develop not only on their own, but also as component parts of an integral whole — in this particular case, the Soviet people. It looks as though social homogeneity will gradually be achieved within the integral national communities, such as the Soviet people, that will appear and develop in various parts of the world and then the nations will ever more rapidly draw closer together. Marxist-Leninists believe that, when this time comes, all these nations will be socialist nations.

It is vital to point out that we have witnessed from the very beginning the emergence of a whole community of sovereign socialist states, which is paving the way for the strengthening of ties between the nations and the removal of the partitions between them.

It is believed that communities of this kind will appear later in other parts of the world, too. After a long period of development of such multinational communities in the context of communist relations, when the new system has been established on a worldwide scale, nations will begin to merge in the full sense of the word, as Lenin foresaw. Proceeding from a strictly scientific approach in its nationalities policy, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has not proclaimed the slogan of a merger of nations as a slogan that has to be

implemented in practical politics. The decisions of CPSU congresses and the Party Program speak of the flowering of socialist nations and their subsequent drawing closer together. The drawing closer together of nations in the period of advanced socialism endows them with an increasing number of common features, thereby increasing their similarity and strengthening the socialist way of life. This process is combined with the development of progressive national traditions and specific national features. The Report of the Central Committee to the 26th Party Congress reads in part:

Experience shows that the intensive economic and social development of each of our republics speeds up the process of their coming closer together in every field. National cultures are thriving and enriching one another, and we are witnessing the molding of the culture of the whole Soviet people — a new social and international community.

Dialectics of National and International Elements

The rise of this new Soviet community helps one thoroughly to understand the dialectics of the national and the international elements under socialism. Life has proved the bourgeois Sovietologists wrong. They hoped that the consolidation of the Soviet nations as a result of the building of socialist society would give rise to centrifugal tendencies, thereby increasing the alienation of these nations. This has not happened, however, because both the objective preconditions (namely, multi-nationalization of public life and, above all, the development of an integral economic complex) and subjective preconditions (embodied in the consistent policy of the CPSU on the nationalities question) cemented the community of peoples inhabiting the USSR.

During the nationwide discussion of the Draft Constitution of the USSR several people made ill-considered proposals to abandon the structure of the Soviet multinational state, which had taken shape, and to proclaim a new Soviet nation. But these proposals were totally unjustified.

To identify the Soviet people with a "new nation" would be tantamount to reducing the new historical community to the level of communities that appeared at earlier historical stages of social development, that is to say, to bringing it down to the level of a "lower order."

On the other hand, this would be tantamount to ignoring the existence of over 100 socialist nations, nationalities and national groups which are developing within the framework of the new historical community in the USSR. And this is quite impermissible. Leonid Brezhnev said:

A new historical community — the Soviet people — has, as we know, taken shape in the USSR. Some comrades — it is true that they are not many — have drawn incorrect conclusions from this. They propose introducing in the Constitution the concept of an integral Soviet *nation*, eliminating the Union and Autonomous Republics or drastically

curtailing the sovereignty of the Union Republics, depriving them of the right to secede from the USSR and of the right to maintain external relations.

The proposals to do away with the Soviet of Nationalities and to set up a unicameral Supreme Soviet are along the same lines. I think that the erroneousness of these proposals is quite clear. The Soviet people's social and political unity does not at all imply the disappearance of national distinctions. Thanks to the consistent pursuance of the Leninist nationalities policy we have, simultaneously with the building of socialism, successfully solved the nationalities question, for the first time in history. The friendship of the Soviet peoples is indissoluble, and in the process of building communism they are steadily drawing ever closer together and their spiritual life is being mutually enriched. But we would be taking a dangerous path if we were artificially to step up this objective process of national integration. That is something Lenin persistently warned against, and we shall not depart from his precepts.

This truth is not to the taste of Western Sovietologists. They have been trying in every way to prove it wrong. Some refer to the development of common features in the life of Soviet peoples in order to accuse the CPSU of attempting to "dissolve" them by force in a sort of supranational formation.

There are authors who assert that the USSR is not at all a family of prospering peoples, but a colonial empire which is continuing the policy of Russian tsarism.

These authors reason that, as soon as the union of nations and their cooperation have promoted economic and industrial progress in the republics, one must question the expediency of radical changes in the former, though backward, ways of life. They claim that the old patriarchal structure was more in line with national traditions. Western Sovietologists also maintain that, if the drawing closer and mutual enrichment of cultures help raise the culture of each nation to a higher level, it is essential to sound the alarm to save the "imperishable values" which might be lost as a result of "alien influence." It does not worry them at all that these "imperishable values" are feudal customs and barbarous superstitions that are rooted in the past. Their purpose here is to make it look as if somebody is encroaching on the "holy of holies" of the national spirit.

There are reasons to believe that no socialist achievement has aroused such anxiety and alarm among the opponents of socialism as the growing multinational cohesion and fraternity of the Soviet peoples. This is, above all, because of the response which Soviet achievements in the solution of the nationalities question have evoked among the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, who are now defending their right to free national existence and genuine progress. The aggravation of the nationalities question in many Western countries has played no small part in the circulation of such insinuations. Based on antagonistic classes, bourgeois society is incapable of establishing peace between people of different races, nationalities and religious faiths or of ensuring the free development of national minorities.

Soviet experience in state development, in the free self-determination of nations, in the establishment of fraternal cooperation between large and small peoples who were divided by deep religious and cultural differences in the past and in the carrying out of a cultural revolution that has brought the benefits of advanced civilization to national and ethnic groups that had been doomed to gradual extinction are achievements of socialism of epoch-making importance.

In a letter to Academician Nikolai I. Konrad of the USSR Academy of Sciences, eminent English historian Arnold Toynbee wrote that the USSR consisted of such a multitude of peoples speaking widely differing languages, who had inherited widely varying cultures, that it was in fact a model for the entire world. By combining these cultural and language varieties in an economic and political entity on a federal basis the Soviet Union had shown how this could be realized in the whole world and how, Arnold Toynbee hoped, it would be realized in the future.

Now that an advanced socialist society has been built in the USSR many bourgeois theoreticians are beginning to realize that development of socialism and communism is an irreversible process. In this connection the accents in Western propaganda have changed. In the past the emphasis was on attempts to oppose socialism to the national future of one republic or another. Today some authors are trying to persuade Soviet republics to develop separately from the Union. To this end they have been circulating the old tales about Russification in an effort to discredit the internationalist nature of the Communist Party's nationalities policy, to raise obstacles to the development of cooperation between the nations and nationalities and to cultivate nationalist trends in the USSR.

Western political experts have tried to create the impression that antagonism between nations and nationalities is a "natural" objective law of social development. By claiming that the nationalities question is "eternal" and "insoluble" and that it is a feature of all social systems, they are alleging that there is no difference between the racial problem in the West and the nationalities problem in the Soviet Union. No wonder the West has advanced the thesis about the inevitable disintegration of multinational states. Western political experts assert that the USSR too will share the same fate. Perhaps this is precisely why the Western critics of the USSR's nationalities policy have recently started increasingly to complain that none of the Union Republics are seceding from the Union, though the right of secession is granted under the Constitution of the USSR. These authors are, however, well aware of the fact that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is strong precisely because every nation knows that its freedom and progress are reliably guaranteed only within the framework of this Union.

National and International Elements in Culture

The question of combining the national element with the international one is also important, because national distinctions as an objective factor will continue to play a big role in the foreseeable future. This is particularly true in the cultural sphere.

No other system has done as much as socialism to help develop an attitude of respect for national values. At the same time it has created an atmosphere that has prevented the cultivation of outdated, savage customs and superstitions which in the past were considered a manifestation of the "national spirit." The cultural revolution, enlightenment and education of broad masses of people and social, scientific and technological progress have, naturally, changed people's way of life. As a result, traditions which are in contradiction with the new way of life and with the new moral principles have been discarded and forgotten. But this does not at all mean, as Western theoreticians have tried to claim, that national culture has degenerated.

The point is that what is "national" was sometimes erroneously identified with something primitive or patriarchal. But the notion of the "national" should include not only what has been inherited from the past, but also elements that have been transformed in new conditions and those that have appeared and developed under socialism. In displaying concern for preserving the historical monuments of a nation, in caring for the cultural values it produced thousands of years ago the socialist state at the same time promotes mutual cultural enrichment of peoples, their resurgence and flowering in the process of creative cooperation.

In the opinion of Marxists the "flowering" of a nation's culture means a development of all the progressive aspects of cultural life, including the advancement of national traditions, the removal of obsolete forms and the enrichment of culture through the creative assimilation of the treasures created by other peoples. In accordance with this concept, the "national" element in the USSR is inseparable from the notion of "Soviet." Hence it follows that the national element no longer opposes the international element, but is, on the contrary, enriched by the latter.

Soviet multinational culture is not merely an arithmetical sum of separate cultures but a creative synthesis of all the best that has been developed by the peoples.

Marxists oppose national narrowness and isolation which, as historical experience has shown, tend to impoverish the cultural life of a nation and lead to creative stagnation. They believe that "one nation can and should learn from others" (Marx). The policy of promoting the flourishing and mutual enrichment of national cultures has opened a new stage in the cooperation of peoples that have achieved a high level of economic and cultural development. It is not

merely a question of cultural exchange or unilateral cultural influence (such as marked the early period, when many Soviet national cultures were established), but a question of profound creative mutual influence and the mutual enrichment of cultures developing on a common social basis and common ideological and theoretical principles.

For instance, before the revolution many peoples of tsarist Russia did not know such forms of art as opera, drama, ballet and orchestral music. As they joined in the building of socialism the emancipated peoples within a brief period created their own works of art in these fields. They made marked progress in cultural development. As peoples advanced their own national cultures they were able to exercise an influence on other cultures in turn. This fruitful interaction is typical of the stage of advanced socialism which the USSR has entered.

Regardless of their nationality Soviet people love Russia's Pushkin, Tolstoi, Tchaikovsky, Repin, Gorky and Mayakovsky, just as they love and cherish Azerbaidzhan's Nizami, Georgia's Rustaveli, the Ukraine's Shevchenko and Uzbekistan's Navoi for their works. Russian culture is also enriched with other cultures. It assimilates all the best in the cultural development of other peoples.

Commenting on this subject in his book *Fidelity to Talent* Rasul Gamzatov, the distinguished poet of Daghestan, writes that, according to the broadcasts of some foreign radio stations, Caucasian writers, including Rasul Gamzatov himself, are fighting to preserve their national and national distinctiveness. He comments: "But the point is that both the writers of Soviet Caucasian republics and myself are well aware that in the USSR there is no need to fight for the preservation of national distinctive features and there is nobody who opposes this. The fact is that the Great October Socialist Revolution itself and Lenin's teachings affirm the national distinctiveness of art, literature and Soviet culture in general. So against whom should we fight, and what for?"

Bourgeois sociology has its own notion of the national and the international elements. It maintains that the national element is something conservative and immutable in nature. Bourgeois sociology regards the international element, the element typical of all mankind, as something alien and hostile to the national element. Proceeding from this false premise bourgeois sociologists come forward with two notions of the interaction between the national and the international elements. They advocate either the abandonment of the national element in the name of what the whole of mankind has achieved (national nihilism, cosmopolitanism), or the preservation in inviolable form of national cultures which, they say, should reject the mutual influence of cultures (nationalism). In both cases they metaphysically divorce the national element from what the whole of mankind has achieved.

Marxist analysis rejects this artificial "either — or" alternative. Marxism sees the national element as a specific form of what has been achieved by the

whole of mankind. On the other hand, features common to the whole of mankind inevitably find their expression in national form, depending on the conditions in which a particular nation exists.

The development of Soviet culture is a two-in-one process which, on the one hand, is marked by the progress of national cultures which are its components, and, on the other, by the strengthening of their unity through mutual enrichment and mutual exchange. It should be mentioned that the latter process has evoked the most frenzied attacks from the theorists of anti-communism. They claim that this process will lead to the standardization and unification of cultures.

Thus socialism promotes the development of national cultures. At the same time it encourages equal participation in the creation of an advanced international culture. It removes the barriers separating one nation from another, it gives them access to the riches of world culture, an opportunity to assimilate these riches through the national means and forms available to them. At the same time socialism advances the development of means of international communication. This, among other things, includes languages.

Western ideologists continue to believe that the existence of many languages has been and is a source of social conflict. When I attended the VII World Sociological Congress held in Varna in Bulgaria in 1970 I heard such an opinion expressed by a bourgeois sociologist. Yes, such conflicts were possible in countries which granted national and language privileges, where the national interests of peoples clashed.

About 130 languages are spoken in the USSR. Their equality has been legislatively affirmed in all spheres of life. The fact that the majority of the Soviet people (over 80 per cent) speak Russian in addition to their own native language is not due to the privileged status of Russian or compulsory study of it. From 90 to 99 per cent of the indigenous population in the Union Republics regard their own languages as their mother tongue and actively use it.

The last census showed that 61.3 million non-Russians in the USSR had a good command of Russian as their second language. The reason for this is not only that Russian has become the common language for communication between the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union, but also that it has become a language for international intercourse, an official language at world forums.

This situation has taken shape historically. The need for communication between the peoples of the country, arising from objective economic causes, stimulated the non-Russian population of Russia to learn the Russian language. Russian is the language of the majority of the country's population. It is, therefore, the most widespread language in the country. Therefore, the deliberate efforts of Western Sovietologists to confuse the question of its "privileged status" are a propaganda trick designed to mislead uninformed people.

The Western propaganda machine has engaged in other unseemly dealings.

Thus, defying the facts, world Zionist centers have for many years been claiming that the Jews in the USSR do not enjoy equal rights with other nationalities in the sphere of culture, that they are being subjected to persecution and discrimination. This is of course, a gross misrepresentation of the truth.

According to the 1979 census, there were 1,811,000 Jews in the USSR, that is to say, they accounted for less than one per cent of the country's population (then 267 million). It is worth noting that in the 1970s the number of Jewish students at Soviet higher education establishments was double that in Israel, which then had a population of 3,880,000. In the 1974/75 academic year there were 350 Jewish students of higher education establishment per 10,000 Jewish citizens. It would be fair to mention that the proportion of students for the whole population of the USSR is 188 students per 10,000. Among scientists Jews account for 6.1 per cent and in literature and the press, 6.5 per cent, among medical workers, 3.4 per cent and among lawyers, 6.7 per cent.

In Birobidzhan, the centre of the Jewish Autonomous Region, there is a Jewish Chamber Music Theatre, a Philharmonic Society and a Jewish People's Theatre. There is a newspaper *Birobidzhaner Stern* which is published in Yiddish and Russian. The local station broadcasts radio and TV programs. In Moscow a Yiddish-language literary magazine *Sovetish Heimland* (Soviet Homeland), has a large circulation.

Addressing a conference of clergy and representatives of religious societies in the USSR, Chief Rabbi of the Moscow Choral Synagogue Levin voiced his indignation at Zionist propaganda.

Why have the Zionists attacked the Soviet Union with such hatred and malice?" he asked. "Why do they cast aspersions on the country that saved the Jews of the whole world from complete extermination by nazi monsters? It was precisely in the Soviet Union that Jews were granted actual, and not formal, equality with all other peoples.

Soviet people are internationalists, and it is against their principles to set one people against another, or even one individual against another because of some national trait. The Constitution of the USSR does not recognize any national privileges. Nationality cannot serve as a yardstick of human dignity or merits. Nor can it be used to set one group of people against another. □

BORIS N. PONOMAREV

The International Significance Of the Soviet Nationalities Policy

The main trend in the development of relations between nations in our country at the present time is a further all-sided convergence of the Soviet nations leading to ever greater consolidation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It stands to reason that even in the stage of developed socialism the unity of the international and the national, and their harmonious combination, does not come about itself. It is secured only through consistent implementation of the scientifically elaborated and realistic nationalities policy of the CPSU and the Soviet Government. That is why, though the Party is legitimately proud of its historic gains in solving the nationalities question, it never relaxes its attention to the problems of the development of socialist nations and relations between nationalities.

Let us take economic development. The situation today is as follows: our country's integrated national-economic complex—the material foundation of the brotherhood and friendship of the peoples—is registering good growth; the Soviet republics have reached approximately the same economic level and are working jointly on the key problem of further progress, namely, to intensify production. The Party's policy today is to have each republic enlarge its material and spiritual potential and, at the same time, to make maximum use of it for all-round development of the whole country.

All this makes particularly obvious the interaction between the progress of the nations and their convergence. Many eloquent facts and figures could be cited to illustrate the recent economic advances made by each Union and autonomous republic, to show what new, up-to-date industries have arisen there, and to exemplify the major steps taken to supply agriculture with the requisite materials and machinery. All this has been achieved by the efforts of the working people in each of the republics and, at the same time, thanks to their fraternal mutual assistance.

The growing scale of the economic interconnections and cooperation among the republics can be judged, for instance, from the fact that in material production the Kazakh Republic now uses goods from 96 industries in other

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republics, to which Kazakhstan, in turn, supplies goods put out by 74 branches of its economy.

Rapid industrial growth and the big virgin lands development program brought a vast influx of people to Kazakhstan from all the other Union republics. The life of the multinational population of the Kazakh Republic is now, in essence, based on ownership of the means of production by all the people.

Among the workers of practically every enterprise in our country there are men and women of dozens of nationalities. These enterprises send their products, in the manufacture of which subcontractors usually take part, to hundreds and thousands of consignees. For example, the Rustavi Iron and Steel Works has 284 subcontractors in many republics of the Soviet Union; the Volzhsky Auto Works has 565 subcontractors. Thousands of enterprises throughout the land are contributing to the development of the Pavlodar-Ekibastuz territorial-industrial complex, to the final stage of the Kama Truck Works project and to building the Baikal-Amur Railway.

Socialist emulation among the republics, among regions, cities and districts in various republics among work collectives in related industries plays an increasing role. The movement to carry out one's internationalist duty as regards prompt and high-quality inter-republic shipments has gained broad popularity. Priority is now given to making maximum use of the material and manpower resources of each republic.

The tasks are: to make the best possible use of production capacities; to improve the quality of goods; to increase farm output throughout the country; to speed up capital construction; to make efficient use of new capacities, and to make fuller use of the manpower resources in the republics that still have a surplus of them, especially in rural areas. Acceleration of scientific and technological progress and updating production are important tasks for all the republics.

Effective functioning of the Soviet Union's national-economic complex and, hence, economic progress and improvement of the working people's living standards in each of the republics depend today to a decisive degree on the implementation of such programs as development of the energy and raw material resources of Siberia, the Soviet Far East and the North and the Baikal-Amur Railway zone, improvement of the non-black-earth zone, and development of the territorial-production complexes. The fraternal assistance given by the Union republics is playing a big part in the speedy development of agriculture in the non-black-earth zone of the RSFSR.

Implementation of the Food Program approved by the May 1982 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, in order to ensure a dependable supply of foodstuffs for the population of our country, is a central task of the Party organization and working people in all republics in the present five-year period and the next one. The internationalist unity and friendship of the peoples

of the Soviet Union will undoubtedly play an important role in attaining the substantial goals outlined in the program. At the same time, these efforts will help to bring our peoples still closer together and to further strengthen their friendship.

The Role of Social Policy

The present stage heightens the role of social policy in the development of relations among the nationalities, and, above all, in solving such problems as shaping the optimal social structure for each republic, raising the people's living standards and cultural level, and regulating migration within, and among, the republics.

A substantial convergence of the classes and social groups is also common to all the republics. The seventies witnessed a noticeable bridging of the gaps between the Soviet republics as regards the social composition of the population, and, what is especially important, the relative size of the working class.

Deep-going changes are taking place in the way of life in the Soviet Union's rural areas; the living standards of the collective farmers and state-farm workers have improved noticeably in recent years. However, substantial regional differences still exist, leading in some cases to an excessive outflow of rural inhabitants and in others to a superfluous rural population. Solution of this problem depends largely on doing away with the social and economic distinctions between the urban and rural areas and on providing equal material and cultural opportunities in various districts of our country.

The growing numbers of the local intelligentsia in all the republics are a noteworthy feature of socialist reality. More painstaking attention should be paid to the training and job-placement of the local intelligentsia. The main thing is to study the real requirements of the republics and of the country as a whole. There are quite a few shortcomings in this respect, it must be admitted. Leonid Brezhnev frankly pointed these out in his speech in Tashkent:

The thesis put forward by the 26th Congress of the CPSU that a classless structure of society will take shape mainly within the historical framework of developed socialism clearly shows the prospects for further consolidating the Soviet people's social and internationalist unity. This thesis should be the guideline in considering the future development of the Soviet nations. Obviously, the rise of classless socialist nations will be the new historic frontier in this development. This new social quality will undoubtedly be a still broader and stronger foundation for their cohesion and progress within the framework of the Soviet people as a social and internationalist community. In the subsequent stages the nations will come still closer together. Then it will be possible to concretize the forms and prospects of this process.

Our country's experience graphically shows that the more democratic a political system and the more access the working people have to the fruits of

democracy, the closer all the nations and nationalities are drawn towards one another. This regularity underlies the consolidation of federal principles in the life of Soviet society and the internationalist nature of the national statehood of the peoples of the USSR.

The state machinery in each Soviet republic serves the interests of all its inhabitants, irrespective of whether or not they belong to its main nationality. It promotes a greater contribution by each nationality to the common assets of the Soviet people as a new historical community, and plays an increasing role in multiplying the fraternal interconnections among the nations and nationalities.

Personnel policy is an effective instrument in the internationalist approach to the development problems of the nationalities. All of our country's republics are multinational, and, as Leonid Brezhnev emphasized in his speech at the celebration in Tashkent, "we must ensure that the nations and nationalities in each republic are adequately represented in the Party and government bodies; and, of course, the competence and ideological and moral qualities of each person should be carefully taken into account."

The historic socioeconomic and political transformations in our country have given a powerful impetus to the further spiritual progress of the Soviet nations in the developed socialist society. This has found expression in the richer spiritual life of our society, its greater diversity and color, in the "new tide" in Soviet art that was mentioned at the 26th Party Congress. It is indicative that talented works which multiply the fame of the Soviet arts are now being created in all the republics by people of many nationalities.

The cultural advancement of all of our country's nationalities is taking place both through borrowings from the achievements of other nations and through further development of their own culture, eliminating its outdated, backward features and reviving the best traditions. A culture which strives only to preserve the traditions of olden times instead of enriching them with the spirit of today, with the achievements of other cultures, will inevitably decline and doom itself to provincialism and stagnation.

Questions connected with language are very important in further consolidating the Soviet people's sociopolitical and ideological unity. Indeed, the nations and ethnic groups of our country speak more than 130 languages.

The genuinely free and equal use of their native language, or languages of other nations and nationalities of the USSR, by all Soviet people clearly reflects the democracy and humanism of our system. Two trends are distinctly manifested here: on the one hand, a rapid spread of Russian as a medium for communication among our nations and on a world-wide scale; on the other hand, the languages of all the peoples of our country continue to develop, mutually enriching one another. In just the nine years between the last two censuses (1970, 1979) the number of people of non-Russian nationalities who were fluent in Russian as their second language increased by nearly 20 million,

and the share of these people in the Soviet Union's total non-Russian population grew from 37 to 49 per cent. Thus, bilingualism—fluency both in the native language and in the language of communication among the nationalities—is a characteristic feature of Soviet reality.

The development of such a large multinational state as ours, Leonid Brezhnev declared at the 26th Congress of the CPSU, gives rise to quite a few problems in relations among the nationalities, problems that call for a sensitive attitude from the Party. The Party is thoroughly studying them, and constantly takes them into account in its everyday work.

Guidelines for the nationalities policy in the developed socialist society have been drawn up in Party documents of recent years. The Party has taken important decisions on the further socioeconomic development of a number of Union and autonomous republics and autonomous regions and areas. It has outlined concrete ways and means of making ideological and political-educational work more effective. The Party committees of republics and regions are paying considerably greater attention to relations among nationalities, and to patriotic and international education.

For example, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan adopted a resolution "On Measures for the Further Promotion of Internationalist Contacts Between the Working People of Azerbaijan and the Working People of Other Fraternal Soviet Republics." The council set up by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia to coordinate contacts among the nationalities inhabiting the republic and also the internationalist education of the population is expanding its activities. Special mention should be made of the USSR Theoretical Conference on "The Russian Language—the Language of Friendship and Cooperation among the Peoples of the USSR," held in Tashkent in 1979, which made interesting and useful recommendations, and was of nationwide importance.

Much attention is being paid to setting up and developing internationalist work collectives at major construction projects and in territorial-productions complexes, and also to heightening their role in the education of the working class, especially its young reinforcements.

The Party committees have begun to make better use of the Soviet Army's vast facilities for the patriotic and international education of young people. Military-patriotic education councils are working actively; and noticeable progress has been achieved in preparing young people for service in the armed forces.

Party organizations in the Ukraine have accumulated considerable experience in combating manifestations of nationalism and anti-Soviet activity by various imperialist, emigre and clerical circles, and in organizing ideological-educational work to counter that activity. The experience of the Party organizations of Byelorussia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and many territories and

regions in the Russian Federation is also interesting in this respect. Centers to study and sum up the methods and results of internationalist and patriotic educational work are being set up in the republics. Among these centers, for example, are the Museums of Friendship of the Peoples in Tbilisi, Baku, Tashkent and Kishinev.

The image of the Soviet person is incompatible with nationalistic narrow-mindedness. Sociological studies show that as far as most people in various parts of our multinational country are concerned, the nationality of their fellow workers, friends or neighbors does not matter much. The important thing, for them, is the competence, ideological, moral and human qualities of those who work and live side by side with them.

Dealing With Survivals of the Past

At the same time, the whole of our experience teaches us that the disappearance of antagonistic classes and the establishment of socialist social relations do not, in themselves, guarantee corresponding changes in the socio-psychological sphere, in the relations among people of different nationalities; that they do not automatically lead to the disappearance of nationalistic prejudices and manifestations. More than once Lenin drew the Party's attention to the fact that survivals of the past do not disappear from the mentality of the masses all at once; they cannot be put into a coffin and lowered into a grave as remnants of an old deceased world.

Hangovers of nationalism are particularly viable and stable in everyday, personal relationships, and are often closely intertwined with survivals of religious beliefs. We must therefore work constantly to ensure that proletarian internationalism takes root as a norm of daily behavior, as an inseparable feature of everyone's active approach to life.

It is no secret that in its fight against existing socialism hostile propaganda in the West is making special efforts to undermine the friendship among the peoples of our country, to revive nationalistic trends and moods. The imperialist espionage agencies, various emigre groups and lie-mongering radio stations in their service work at this day and night.

The intensive subversive work against the Soviet Baltic peoples calls for close attention from the Communists and the guiding bodies of those republics. Constant efforts should be made to consolidate internationalism and friendship of the peoples and to overcome negative phenomena in the nationalities question wherever they occur.

The press, radio and television, lecturers and other Soviet public speakers, the lecture groups of Party committees, organizations of the Znaniye Society and cultural education establishments should take a most active part in the International and patriotic education of the working people.

As we know, internationalists are not born but are educated. The Communist

Party regards constant improvement and perfection of internationalist and patriotic education, of its forms and methods, as one of the chief means of consolidating the Leninist friendship of the peoples, as a cardinal condition for accelerating our society's advance along the road of building communism.

The struggle for liberation from foreign national oppression goes back thousands of years. In our time, too, the nationalities question is crucial to the development of human society.

That is why the theory and practice of restructuring national relations in the USSR have acquired such epochal importance. Soviet experience is exerting a tremendous influence on the peoples' struggle for national independence, freedom and equality. Many aspects of CPSU experience are being widely used by progressive states, parties and social movements throughout the world in their political and ideological struggle against imperialism, for national independence and renewal.

The Marxist-Leninist parties are the most resolute and consistent fighters for full national equality. If we were to single out the basic reasons why the communist movement has over many decades devoted so great and unrelaxing attention to the nationalities question, we could point to the following.

First, the fight for national freedom and independence, for full equality, trust and friendship between nations is an inalienable part of the genuine social renovation of the world in our age and, consequently, of the struggle the Communists are waging for a better future for humanity.

Second, the fight for national equality and just international relations is a cardinal factor in successfully countering the imperialist policy of aggravating the international situation, and a factor, too, in the fight against the war danger and the arms drive. "Our experience," Lenin emphasized, "has left us with the firm conviction that only exclusive attention to the interests of various nations can remove grounds for conflicts, can remove mutual mistrust, can remove the fear of any intrigues and create that confidence, especially on the part of workers and peasants speaking different languages, without which there absolutely cannot be peaceful relations between peoples or anything like a successful development of everything that is of value in present-day civilization." (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 386).

The unleashing of aggression and of wars of conquest has usually been preceded by the fomenting of national strife and chauvinism. On the eve of the First World War the imperialist powers poisoned the European atmosphere by a campaign of nationalism and chauvinism. In preparing for the Second World War, Hitler fascism carried chauvinism and racism to the extreme, spreading the maniacal idea of dividing the whole of mankind into master and slave nations. This was embodied in the policy of destroying such nationalities as the Jews and the Gypsies, and condemning the Slavs and other peoples to slavery and extinction. Imperialism has waged countless colonial wars of aggrandise-

ment under the flag of nationalism and chauvinism. It has exploited the idea of national exclusiveness to divert the peoples from their pressing internal problems.

All the facts show that the dominant tendency of imperialist strategy today is economic and political militarization, aggravation of international tension, an unrestrained arms drive complemented by intensified struggle against national liberation movements, and by a desire to harden the economic dependence of newly free countries and freely exploit their natural resources.

This policy is being countered by that of the socialist states and of the Communist and Workers' Parties. The Marxist-Leninist approach to the nationalities question and the consistent defense of the right of nations to self-determination are one of the foundations of the international activity of the CPSU and the Soviet state. The USSR Constitution legislatively consolidates the fundamental principles that determine the Soviet Union's relations with other countries.

Soviet experience in resolving the nationalities question finds its fuller reflection in the activities of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the countries of the socialist community, in the life of society and in their conduct of international relations.

In each socialist country the Marxist-Leninist party pursues its nationalities policy by methods appropriate to its internal specifics and history. However, common principles and regularities manifest themselves despite all the differences in resolving the nationalities question, as also in the building of socialism generally. It is important that the countries of the socialist community find a correct combination of their national interests and those of the community, that they cooperate and remove everything likely to impede the common advance. Socialist internationalism, which is proletarian internationalism in the conditions of socialist and communist construction, embodies respect for the national and historical specific features of each country, readiness to give mutual support and disinterested mutual assistance, and jointly to defend the gains of socialism. The continued strengthening and development of the principles of socialist internationalism—what I would call their day-to-day translation into practice—is increasingly becoming an urgent task, especially now that world reaction is stepping up its subversion against the socialist community.

The Developing Countries

Public opinion, government and political leaders and parties in the newly-free countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are displaying a keen interest in the Soviet Union's solution of the nationalities question.

There the nationalities question has acquired especial acuteness. It involves the people's struggle against imperialism, for full national liberation, freedom from exploitation by the multinational corporations and realization of the right

to independent development.

The link between the nationalities question in developing countries and their choice of social and political development now stands out with especial clarity. For these countries the question is: either a "repetition of the past," that is, capitalist development with its built-in national enmity and inequality, exploitation of the laboring people, hardship, poverty and hunger; or the new road blazed by the Great October Revolution, a road that leads to socialism, a society free of national conflict and in which friendship and equality of nations have become an immutable law of social development, in which there is no exploitation of man by man.

One of the most characteristic features of present-day world development is, undoubtedly, aggravation of national relations in the industrial capitalist countries. This is an inalienable element of the continued deepening of the general crisis of the capitalist system. Hence, the struggle to preserve and consolidate national sovereignty, to oppose imperialist dictation, and to uphold the equality of national minorities and groups, blends with solution of the entire complex of pressing social problems, and, in the final analysis, with the socialist restructuring of social relations.

National demands are an important component of the political programs and activity of fraternal parties in many industrial capitalist countries.

Whether it is a matter of the thorny Northern Ireland issue, of the struggle against racial and national oppression of the Blacks, Indians and other ethnic groups in the United States, the position of foreign workers in the FRG, France and other countries, of French-speaking Quebec, the dispute between the Walloons and Flemings in Belgium, or national autonomy for a number of Spanish provinces, or for Scotland and Wales in Britain—the Communists define their position in keeping with Lenin's thesis on combining the struggle for a settlement of the nationalities question with the struggle for fundamental anti-monopoly transformations, for the class interests of the working people, for social progress.

All the peculiarities of the nationalities question in different countries notwithstanding, the experience of the USSR and of the lands of existing socialism is a sure guide and valuable help in finding ways to its solution.

In a more general sense, the international significance of Soviet experience lies above all in the following:

First, the experience of the world's biggest country, with its vast national multiformity, a country in which the ruling classes for centuries implanted national discord and oppression, has irrefutably shown in practice the realistic possibility of forming a qualitatively new type of relationship between nations and nationalities, based on equality, justice and friendship. It has convincingly proved also that such relationships are a powerful factor of social progress.

Second, it has been substantiated in theory and proved in practice that,

inasmuch as all national oppression and inequality are the products of a system based on exploitation of man by man, the struggle for a genuine settlement of the nationalities question is inseparable from the struggle for social liberation of the working people. Capitalism is incapable of anything approaching a consistent solution of the nationalities question.

Third, real equality of nations presupposes realization of the right to self-determination and the establishment of one's own state, a free choice of social and economic system, and sovereignty in shaping relations with other countries and peoples. Only a voluntary union of all component nations and nationalities provide a stable political basis of a multinational state.

Fourth, the political liberation of nations can be complete and stable only if it is combined with the refashioning of economic and social relations, with the fight for economic equality. In present-day conditions, with dozens of countries grappling with the complex task of overcoming centuries of backwardness and attaining economic equality with developed capitalist countries, the experience of the Soviet republics is a valuable and inspiring example. Especially important in this context is the proven realistic possibility of bypassing the capitalist stage, or at least substantially reducing it, in the advance to socialism.

Fifth, national equality is closely linked with the character of the political system. The closer it comes to genuine government by the people and the more working people are involved in the affairs of state and society, the greater is the scope it provides for achieving national renewal in countries that have set foot on the path of independent development.

Sixth, a just solution of the nationalities problem requires a constant, organized and purposeful political vanguard capable of correctly interpreting and expressing the national interests, and of concentrating the energy of the people in such a way that its efforts merge with those of other peoples in a common international fight against imperialism, for national freedom and social progress. In other words, there has to be a party that gives voice to the interests of the working class, of all working people, a party guided by scientific socialism.

Lastly, seventh, long years of experience have demonstrated the importance of the Party's concentrated efforts in educating the working people of all nationalities in a spirit of internationalism and implanting the ideas of friendship and brotherhood of nations.

Naturally, what has been said does not exhaust the rich Soviet experience, which has many facets and covers different development stages.

I would like to emphasize: the CPSU is far from inviting other peoples to copy Soviet examples without due account of their own concrete historical setting, place and time. The CPSU is against that. Each people, each country, can borrow from this rich experience whatever it considers necessary and useful. What are we striving for is to make this rich experience, in all its diversity, accessible to all interested in it. What the CPSU is striving for is to

bring the truth, backed by arguments and convincing facts—of which there are an abundance—of our national policy to the broad masses of the working people in other countries, to all revolutionaries and fighters against national oppression. The better and clearer we show the results of our Leninist policy on this question, the greater will be our contribution to promoting universal peace and countering the dangerous plans of imperialism, to the struggle for national liberation and social progress.

The path traversed by the Soviet Union since the Great October Revolution, its epochal gains, and the developed socialist society we have built constitutes a reliable foundation for the continued perfection of national relations, closer friendship of the peoples, the use of our vast creative potential for the building of communism. And on this road the Soviet people are opening new vistas for the whole of humanity. □

Part Three

The International Significance
Of the Formation of the USSR

VICTOR M. CHKHIKVADZE

The International Significance Of the Formation of the USSR

The emergence of the world's first integral multinational Soviet state served as the second greatest impetus, after the October Revolution, for the growth of the world communist movement and inspired the masses of people to more vigorous action for social emancipation and national liberation.

The formation of the USSR was the realization of Lenin's idea of solving the national question through the recognition of the right to self-determination for all nations, of his appeal to the internationalist unity of workers of all nations, a unity which is insistently required by their class interests in the struggle against international capital. The great truth of Marxism-Leninism about the unbreakable fraternal solidarity of the working people and their unity helping them overcome the barriers of contradictions among nations has materialized in the multinational Soviet Union.

The formation of the USSR has given the working people the world over and all oppressed nations a clear idea of the future, enabling them to choose the goals and ways of the struggle for socialism. The peoples are coming to realize ever more clearly the correctness of Lenin's prediction that with the national liberation movement proceeding to solving the tasks of social emancipation, its role in the world revolutionary process will heighten.

The anti-imperialist struggle is part and parcel of the world revolutionary process today. It dispells the myth about a unity between the parent states and their former colonies, about an "understanding" between the oppressors and oppressed. Imperialism is ever more clearly showing its inherent inability to improve the conditions of the working people and solve the national question. It is the Soviet Union, and not the bourgeois states, that the peoples fighting for freedom and independence look upon as their defender and supporter. Today, the world is witnessing that millions of people on all continents, taking into account Soviet experience, are advancing along the road paved by the October Revolution.

Naturally, taking into account Soviet experience does not mean copying it mechanically. The multinational socialist states, the countries of Asia, Africa

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and Latin America which have won their independence recently and the Marxist-Leninist parties in the capitalist world are elaborating their own approach to present-day reality, charting their own ways of solving the social and national problems confronting their countries. But there is no path leading to socialism — nor can there be any — bypassing the general laws discovered by Marxism-Leninism and confirmed by the experience of the USSR and the international practice of the revolutionary struggle and socialist development.

What with the rapidly growing national awareness of the peoples, the Communist and Workers' Parties, drawing on Marxist-Leninist theory and the experience of the USSR, have invariably stressed that the successes of the national liberation movement largely depend on its links with the other currents of the world revolutionary process, above all with the USSR and the world socialist system.

The Soviet Union was the first country to prove in practice the accuracy of the conclusion made by Marx and Engels that as the antagonism between classes vanishes, the antagonism of nations will come to an end.* But it is not only this ultimate result that is of international significance, but the forms and methods elaborated by Soviet practice of creating and consolidating basically new, fraternal relations between nations and nationalities, opening the way to an ever closer cohesion between them. The influence of the Soviet experience of national and state development has been the strongest in the solution of the national question in the fraternal socialist countries. It is the practice of these countries, which differ substantially between one another and from the Soviet Union in a number of economic, ethnic, demographic and other aspects, that has been the first real confirmation of the great international significance of the Soviet experience of national and state development and the solution of the national question in a truly democratic manner in the interests of the working people.

The right to self-determination for those national groups which have objective conditions for this (dense population on a definite territory), the establishment of the equality of all citizens, irrespective of nationality, race, language or religion and the possibility for developing national culture, specifically, instruction at educational establishments in the native tongue for the national minorities and small ethnic groups — these are the democratic demands which were advanced and realized by the Communist and Workers' Parties of the fraternal socialist countries using the USSR's experience in this area.

Here are a few examples. The Mongolian People's Republic has been displaying constant concern for its national minorities. According to Article 83 of its Constitution, the state gives the people of all nationalities in the Republic an opportunity to develop national culture and conduct studies and clerical work

* See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 125.

in their native languages.

In the Hungarian People's Republic which is populated, apart from Hungarians, by Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Germans, Slovaks and Romanians, all the nationalities are guaranteed equal rights including the use of their mother tongue, education in the national language, and also the preservation and development of their culture (Para. 61 of the Constitution). The national minority unions, set up for the people of non-Hungarian descent, are given the right to advance proposals to state and public organizations. The system of education in the languages of the national minorities covers kindergartens, elementary and high schools and teacher training colleges. Special departments have been set up in the relevant ministries of the Republic to meet the requirements of the national minorities in the field of culture and education. Newspapers in Serbo-Croatian, German and Slovak are published in the country.

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, in which there are about 40 national minorities, is doing everything possible to help the smaller peoples overcome age-old backwardness and ensure their actual as well as formal equality with the Vietnamese nation, despite all the difficulties caused by the criminal aggression of the US imperialists. A specific number of seats is reserved for representatives of the national minorities in the National Assembly and they are represented in the People's Councils in proportion to the number of their people. The state is promoting the growth of production in the regions populated by the national minorities, and is expanding the school network, the health protection system, and other services. The people which previously had no written language have been helped by the state to create one.

The German Democratic Republic supports in every way the development of the economy and national culture of the Sorbs, a small Slavic people living in the districts of Cottbus and Dresden. The GDR, which put an end to the forced Germanization of the Sorbs, provided education in the Sorb language, including at institutions of higher education. On the territory populated by the Sorbs their language is official on a par with German. The Domowina, a national Sorb organization, promotes the development of Sorb culture and arts and the socialist development of the Sorb working people, and takes an active part in the political life of the GDR.

Opposing national oppression and upholding the right of nations to self-determination, the Communist and Workers' Parties of the fraternal socialist countries, just like the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, were not about to subdivide their multinational states into smaller regions, remembering Lenin's words that large state formations are preferable. Drawing a clear distinction between the right of nations to self-determination, up to and including secession, and the expediency of exercising this right, they give priority not to narrow national interests but to class interests of the working people in shaping their policy on the national question.

The Czechoslovakian Experience

The creative application of Soviet experience is graphically illustrated by the evolution of state and national structure in Czechoslovakia where the main problem was the legal relations between Czechs and Slovaks, the two nations constituting the bulk of the population. The autonomous status of Slovakia within the united Czechoslovak Republic, legalized in the Constitution in 1948, proved to be an erroneous attempt to skip the phase of federative unification. The simplified understanding of the national question by the then leadership, geared only to the accelerated economic development of Slovakia, and the underestimation of the national sentiments and interests of Slovaks, led to a situation in which the federalization of Czechoslovakia became indispensable. Therefore, the preamble of the Constitutional Law on Federalization passed by the National Assembly on October 27, 1968, says: the Czechs and Slovaks have agreed on creating a Czechoslovak federation, "recognizing the inalienable right to self-determination, up to secession and respecting the sovereignty of each people and its right freely to determine the way and form of its national and state life." According to Article 1 of the Constitutional Law on Federalization, the federation is based on the voluntary union of equal national states of the Czech and Slovak peoples; each of them has the right to self-determination. Article 1 also says that the Czechoslovak Republic is an expression of the will of the two sovereign peoples — Czechs and Slovaks — to live in one federative state.

After two years of the existence of the federation, amendments were introduced in the Constitutional Law in 1970, eliminating excessive decentralization in several areas of the country's social, economic and political life. "In relations between the nationalities," said Gustáv Husák in 1972, "we have derived a good deal from the practice of the Leninist nationalities policy. The experience of national development in the Soviet Union has helped us to regulate the relations between the Czech and Slovak peoples on federative principles."

The practice of the fraternal socialist countries has shown that a creative use of Soviet experience and application of its basic principles with due account for local conditions help to solve the national question successfully. On the other hand, a departure from the general laws governing socialist national and state development, as confirmed by Soviet experience, inevitably leads to the worsening of relations between nations, the spread of chauvinism, and ultimately harms the common cause of building socialism.

The accelerated development of productive forces on the basis of scientific and technological progress and provision of peaceful conditions for building socialism and communism are impossible in the present international situation without interconnection with and mutual assistance from the socialist countries

and without the development of international socialist division of labor. Lenin said that the peoples that chose the socialist path must have "a close military and economic alliance . . . for otherwise the capitalist . . . will crush and strangle us separately."*

The socialist community embodies precisely the new, socialist type of international relations among sovereign and equal states united by common vital interests and goals. The Constitution of the USSR has proclaimed the relations of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance with socialist countries to be the cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy. According to Article 30 of the Constitution, as part of the world socialist system, of the socialist community, the Soviet Union shall promote and strengthen friendship and cooperation and comradely mutual assistance with the other socialist countries on the basis of socialist internationalism, and shall actively participate in economic integration and in the international socialist division of labor. The same idea is also stressed on the constitutions of the fraternal socialist countries.

The political, economic, cultural and military cooperation among the socialist countries is conducted on the basis of bilateral and multilateral treaties of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance. An immense role in promoting these relations is played by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

The international experience of world socialism has borne out Lenin's words that building a new society is no easy task at all. The strengthening of the socialist community is taking place against the backdrop of constant economic, political, ideological and military pressure on the part of imperialism. The ruling circles of the NATO countries, the USA above all, have been trying incessantly to break the unity of the socialist countries. It is an open secret that a great material and ideological effort is being exerted, by the US ruling circles for instance, to exploit the mistakes and miscalculations in the domestic policy of the Polish People's Republic in the recent past, in order to tear it away from the family of socialist states. But the brazen interference of imperialist forces in the internal affairs of Poland with a view of disintegrating the socialist community is encountering a strong rebuff.

In the relations among the socialist countries their national interests are harmonized with their international tasks. The socialist community vigilantly safeguards the revolutionary gains of the working class of all socialist states.

Newly Independent Countries

The formation of the USSR has always been of immense significance for the struggle of the peoples in the colonial periphery of imperialism. They view the solution of the national question in the USSR, and later in the other socialist

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 296.

countries, to be the prototype of their future development. Therefore, after the liberation from colonial dependence and the formation of sovereign states many of them began, to a certain extent, to apply some elements of solving on the state level the national question of the USSR and in the socialist world as a whole.

Colonialism has left the young states a grim legacy in the area of relations between nations. These states usually have a complex ethnic composition of their populations and are formed within the boundaries of the former colonies which had been drawn arbitrarily by the colonialists in disregard of historical, economic and — most important — ethnic factors. For centuries imperialism and colonialism have deliberately retarded the economic, political and cultural development of the enslaved peoples. This largely hampered and complicated the formation of nations. In many countries, especially in Tropical Africa, national consolidation is far from being completed, and in some of them it is only beginning.

The complex ethnic composition of the population and the unfinished process of national consolidation were exploited by the colonialists in their "divide and rule" policy. This resulted in mutual distrust, alienation of some ethnic groups and communities and in many cases in open enmity, acute interethnic conflicts and armed clashes taking a toll of millions of human lives.

In the specific conditions of newly-free countries, in many of which nations have not yet taken shape, the regulation of relations between nationalities and ethnic groups is of primary importance. Of course, many problems there differ from those which confronted the USSR in the past. But the very approach of the Soviet state, which was the first to regard the legal forms of organizing nationalities, tribes and ethnic groups as part of the national question, is of great value to all newly-free countries.

The constitutions of the newly-free states proclaim, as a rule, the equality of citizens, irrespective of their nationality, race or tribe and establish strict responsibility for violation of this principle. Thus, according to Article 45 of the Guinean Constitution, "any act of racial discrimination or racist propaganda is punishable by law."

A major aspect of the principle of national equality registered in the constitutions of young independent states is the juridical and actual equality of the languages of all nations and nationalities. This provides opportunities for education in local languages and the use of these languages in the mass media, in clerical work, at courts, and so on. There is every reason to state that the Soviet experience of solving the language problem is of undoubted interest to the young independent states and, as the record has shown, they are making use of it. The governments of newly-free countries do extensive work to study and develop local languages. Written languages are created for many of them, which, in turn, helps to wipe out illiteracy among the adult population and

improve the school system.

Given full equality of the languages of all nations and nationalities and their free development and mutual enrichment, life itself brings out one of them as the official language for the whole of the country. This was the case in the USSR where the Russian language, voluntarily accepted by the Soviet people as the language to be used by all nations and nationalities, has become a major factor in strengthening the socio-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people, facilitating the development and mutual enrichment of the national cultures. It has given all Soviet people broad access to the cultural treasures of world civilization.

The actual inequality of ethnic groups and communities in the newly-free countries is an aftermath of colonial rule. The practice of national development in the USSR has shown very well that to draw all the nations of a multinational state into building a new, just democratic social system and to eradicate the causes of tensions among them, there must be actual as well as legal equality of all nations and nationalities. That is why the young states, especially the socialist-oriented ones, are keenly interested in the Soviet practice of national and state development and of the transition of a number of Soviet peoples to socialism bypassing the capitalist stage of development.

The socialism-oriented countries are taking measures to speed up the economic and cultural advancement of backward regions: industrial enterprises and roads are being built and the network of cultural establishments is being expanded there. Such is, for instance, the policy pursued by the Algerian government with regard to Kabylie, populated by the peoples of the Berber group. Between 1968 and 1970 it adopted plans for the development of Kabylie and other backward regions and allocated considerable sums for the development of industry, agriculture, medical care and education.

Federation and autonomy are becoming major instruments of solving the national question in many young states. Here, too, the experience of the USSR exerts considerable influence on the young Afro-Asian states. This can be seen, in particular, from the fact that they have been applying the principles that are typical only of socialist federalism and autonomy.

Thus, in India, Nigeria and a number of other countries federations are being set up on the national principle. The reorganization of the States in India in 1956 and in Nigeria in 1967, which was done in accordance with this principle, helped to ease the frictions and conflicts between nationalities. The Constitution of the Union of Burma provides for the use of two forms of autonomy (national states and national districts) in accordance with the national composition of the population and the level of national consolidation of individual peoples. These autonomous formations enjoy equal representation in one of the supreme bodies of state power — the State Council — which resembles the representation of the Soviet Union republics in the Presidium of the USSR

Supreme Soviet.

Understandably, the processes going on in the newly-free countries are far from being entirely identical with those that took place in the Soviet Union. Their economic and political systems and the very social environment of state power are different. Therefore, it would be a gross mistake to copy Soviet experience mechanically. The Soviet Union does not impose stereotypes and ready-made solutions of state organization on anyone. It exerts a growing influence on the course of history by the very fact of its existence, by the real practice of a new type of social relations and relations among its nations and by the force of example in the solution of the formidable problems which capitalism is unable to cope with.

Early Legislative Acts

History has assigned the USSR an honorable role in the struggle against colonialism, for the national liberation and social emancipation of oppressed peoples, for their right to manage their own affairs independently. Its first basic legislative acts — the Appeal of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets to Workers, Soldiers and Peasants, the Decree on Peace, and the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia — had proclaimed the equality and sovereignty of its peoples, their right to free self-determination, up to and including secession, abolition of all national privileges and limitations, and free development of national minorities and ethnic groups. The 1918 Constitution of the Russian Federation, recognizing equal rights of the citizens, regardless of race or nationality, declared any privileges or advantages on their basis, just like any oppression of the national minorities or restriction of their equality, to be in violation of the fundamental laws of the Republic.

The Leninist principles of the self-determination of the peoples, their national and racial equality underlie not only the home but also foreign policy of the Soviet state. As early as 1919 the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets passed a resolution on oppressed nations denouncing the Versailles Peace Conference, thus exposing once again the brazen hypocrisy of the imperialist bourgeoisie and its crude mockery of the right to self-determination for the peoples reflected in a new division of mankind into victors and vanquished, into great and small nations, into races destined to rule and races destined to be slaves.

The active support by the young Soviet government of the principle of self-determination and the national and racial equality of all peoples was manifested in the Appeal of the Soviet Government To All the Toiling Moslems of Russia and the East on November 20 (December 3), 1917; the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars On Turkish Armenia issued on December 29, 1917 (January 11, 1918); the treaty between the Russian Federation and Persia of February 26, 1921; the treaty between the Russian Federation and Turkey of

March 16, 1921, and a number of other actions by the Soviet state.

Soviet power recognized the independence of Finland and Poland which had been part of the former Russian Empire. The Soviet government stood up vigorously for the national and racial equality of the peoples at the League of Nations as well.

The USSR's principled stand on these issues was expressed in a number of its foreign policy moves during the Second World War (the Declaration of the Soviet Government at the Inter-Allied Meeting in London of September 24, 1941, the Moscow Declaration of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain on the responsibility of Nazi criminals for the atrocities committed, and others).

Owing to the persistent efforts of the USSR, supported by other progressive forces in the world, the principle of self-determination of nations was included in the United Nations Charter. On their insistence the UN General Assembly at its Seventh Session in 1952 adopted a special resolution, The Right of the Peoples and Nations to Self-Determination.

During the elaboration of the draft Covenants on Human Rights the delegates of the imperialist powers were strongly opposed to including the right of nations to self-determination, for they knew that acceptance of the Soviet proposals on that question would be another effective blow at colonialism and imperialism. However, with the active support of other socialist countries and young developing states, the Soviet Union ensured the inclusion in the Covenants of the provision that all peoples should have the right to self-determination; that given that right they can freely establish their political status and freely determine their economic, social and cultural development; and that for the attainment of their goals all peoples can freely use their natural resources with no detriment to any commitments associated with international economic cooperation based on the principle of mutual benefit and commitments following from international law.

The approval by the United Nations of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Declaration and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was the result of the stubborn struggle waged by the USSR and the socialist community as a whole, which has been joined by the developing states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. These documents serve as the moral, political and legal basis for a final elimination of all forms of the shameful system of colonialism, racism and apartheid.

The 1977 Constitution

The formation of the USSR consolidated the international status of the Soviet state and heightened its significance as a factor of world peace. The historic appeal of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR of July 13, 1923, To All the Peoples and Governments of the World solemnly

declared that the federal state, formed on the basis of the fraternal cooperation of the peoples of the Soviet Republics, "sets itself the goal of preserving peace with all nations," that the USSR seeks peaceful and friendly relations and economic cooperation with all peoples.

The adoption of the new Constitution of the USSR and the Constitutions of the Union and Autonomous Republics has marked another milestone in the development of the Soviet state and its home and foreign policy.

The Constitution of the USSR has juridically formalized the main ideas of the Leninist foreign policy of the CPSU and the Soviet state aimed at creating a favorable international climate for the building of communism in the USSR, at defending its state interests, at consolidating the positions of world socialism, supporting the struggle of the peoples for national liberation and social progress, at preventing wars of aggression and achieving general and complete disarmament, and at consistently implementing the principles of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems.

The new Constitution of the Soviet state of the whole people has declared the constitutional principles of Soviet foreign policy: sovereign equality, mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force, inviolability of frontiers; territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for human rights and basic freedoms, equality and the right of the peoples to decide their own fate, and cooperation among states.

At the same time, the peaceful foreign policy of the USSR provides for a firm and resolute rebuff to the aggressive intentions of the imperialists, to any encroachments on the security of the USSR and its allies. The socialist community possesses everything it needs to defend its historic revolutionary gains.

During the 60 years of its existence the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has done its utmost to strengthen international security and restrain the intentions and actions of the imperialist aggressors. And today the hopes of all the peoples for a lasting world peace are associated with the USSR. □

GEORGI KIM

The USSR and National-State Construction in Developing Countries

As early as 1948 the progressive British economist Maurice Dobb expressed his belief that the Soviet experience should evoke much interest in countries of the East and, in particular, become a model for future industrialization in Asia.¹ Twenty years later the well-known Swedish scholar Gunnar Myrdal noted that for many Asian leaders "Soviet successes in planning convey lessons they would like to apply when charting their own course of development."²

The attraction of the Soviet example for developing countries has had to be admitted by many other bourgeois scientists and even by avowed anticommunists. It should also be noted that the leaders of emergent states have been interested in the experience of the building of socialism not only in the entire USSR, but especially in its outlying regions — the republics of the Caucasus, Central Asia, etc., because the initial level of their development was close to that of many present-day developing countries.

What in the example of the Soviet republics attracts the newly-free peoples? First of all, the solution of the nationalities problem, because of the nearly 2,000 nations, nationalities and tribes populating the earth more than 1,600 live in Asia and Africa. The very complex and by no means smooth process of the formation of nations, national states is now taking place in those regions. It goes without saying that the experience of the USSR, which built socialism through the fraternal cooperation of dozens of peoples and nationalities that were previously ruthlessly oppressed by tsarism, is very instructive for the emergent nations, especially against the background of the national strife that is being whipped up by imperialism in the former colonial and dependent countries. The British scholar Geoffrey Barraclough rightly noted that "it could hardly escape the notice of Asian and African leaders . . . that the Russians did more in a quarter of a century for the education of the peoples living in the Arctic circle and in the Caucasus, who in 1917 had not even a written language, than the British did in India in an occupation of nearly two hundred years."³

The experience of the Soviet East cannot but have a growing impact on the

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developing countries because a stage of historical evolution has now set in for them in which the center of gravity is increasingly switching from problems of national liberation to problems of social emancipation. This does not mean, of course, any easing or "abolition" of national problems for the Afro-Asian world at the present stage of its development. But this does mean that today the solution of tasks of national importance, including national-ethnic problems, is impossible without the solution of social problems, without the attainment of social justice to a certain extent.

It is at the present stage that the experience of the Soviet Union and its national republics acquires particular importance. And one of its most important lessons, as was stated by the President of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization Abdel Rahman Sharqawi, is the "opening of the road to social justice."

Problems of Industrialization

At the present stage all the emergent countries (irrespective of their social orientation) are inevitably confronted by crucial problems of socioeconomic transformation capable of eliminating backwardness and ensuring stable economic growth through the creation of the necessary national reproduction mechanisms. It is in this connection that exceptional importance is being attached in the developing world to problems of industrialization. The developing countries regard large-scale industrialization not only and not just as a means of eradicating the backwardness of their economy but also a means of altering their position in the world economy.

Thus, through industrialization they strive to secure a fundamentally different place in the world capitalist economy. But the capitalist-type process of industrial growth, while solving in part the problems inherited from the colonial past, generates new contradictions and imparts added impetus to existing ones, to the "old" social contradictions. These contradictions have internal and external aspects.

Under socialism, the process of industrial construction solves the major tasks of development on a totally different social basis, ensuring the attainment of essentially different economic and social aims. A vivid example of the epoch-making experience of industrialization under socialism presented by the republics of Soviet Central Asia where the policy of all-out industrialization, fully transforming the economic structures, facilitated to a tremendous degree the attainment of that stage of maturity of the new society when, to quote Leonid Brezhnev, the "restructuring of the totality of social relations on the collectivist principles intrinsically inherent in socialism is completed."⁴

The erstwhile backward outlying regions of tsarist Russia have now become major industrial centers of the USSR, playing a vital role in the division of labor both inside the country and in the socialist community of states. The smallest of

the Central Asian republics — Tadzhikistan — in the early 1970s was already delivering some 50 types of modern industrial products to many Union Republics. Equipment for textile enterprises, various electrical equipment, farm machines, oil and gas fittings are exported from Tadzhikistan to Romania, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, the KPDR, Cuba, Bulgaria, the GDR and many other countries.

In opposition to the situation taking shape in the newly-free countries under capitalist development, the flexible purposeful policy of industrialization based on socialist relations ensures fundamental conditions for eliminating relative agrarian overpopulation. One example of this is Uzbekistan, where as a result of the insufficient mobility of the rural indigenous population and under the influence of the rapid pace of demographical growth in the 1960s there began to arise the problem of tapping labor resources more fully in rural areas oriented at labor in the agrarian sphere. It was in response to this acute need that a policy of industrialization of agrarian regions and small towns was drafted and begun to be implemented; this policy has already yielded definite results: thus, whereas in 1960 rural areas accounted for 7.4 per cent of the total number of industrial workers and office employees of Uzbekistan, in 1977 the figure was already 13.3 per cent.

It is especially important to stress that the establishment and development of the modern economic structure in the Central Asian republics rests on the extensive economic aid given by all the Union Republics of the country. For instance, more than a third of all the capital investments in Kirghizia in the period from 1960 to 1978 was made from the national budget, and the republic's economy developed as an organic component of the unified economic complex of the country.

If we are to speak of concrete programs of industrialization adopted by developing countries, their fulfillment depends on how the most complex economic and social problems typical of the present-day Oriental countryside are being solved. Its large share in the difficulties of development that are being overcome by the emergent countries is clearly determined by the concentration of the bulk of the economically active population in agriculture. According to FAO statistics, by the early 1980s about 60 per cent of this population in all Afro-Asian non-socialist states were concentrated in agriculture.⁵ The preponderance of agrarian labor over industrial labor revealed by this figure demonstrates the relative backwardness of the developing countries. The most important specifics of the agrarian sector (low productivity, weak branch diversification, poorly developed infrastructure, etc.) impart to this backwardness an absolute nature as well.

At the same time, however, the negative social consequences of the "green revolution" (the further worsening of the position of the rural poor) affected virtually every village. The process of the bourgeoisification of the rural upper

crust brings with it a dismantling of the traditional social structures and distributive mechanisms which used to compensate working people to some extent for consequences of their exploitation by pre-capitalist methods. These methods themselves continue to be widespread, but now they are becoming intertwined with capitalist ones that have been mastered to a certain extent by the village rich.

Taking place parallel to this is the worsening of the employment conditions of the rural working people under the pressure of the growing agrarian overpopulation. The general outcome of this is the relative worsening everywhere and absolute worsening in many instances of the position of the poorer sections of the rural population. Poverty in the countryside is acquiring terrible scope. In Southern and Southeast Asia alone more than 500 million people live in absolute poverty, three-quarters of them being concentrated precisely in agrarian areas.

In Afro-Asian countries the impact of the mass pauperization of the rural working people is being felt at all levels of social life and consciousness. Under its pressure, the social aspects of development are moving to the forefront in the agrarian policy of the national states. An intensive search is in progress for an effective strategy of struggle against the poverty and backwardness of the countryside. The theory and practice of agrarian development in the Afro-Asian world quite often turns to the experience of agrarian transformations in the Soviet Central Asian republics.

As has been already stressed, there exist objective preconditions determining the value of this experience for the developing countries. They are, firstly, the considerable similarity of the characteristics of the agrarian system of most Afro-Asian countries and the former Turkestan, the Bukhara and Khiva Khanates; secondly, the typological similarity of the tasks that were being solved in Central Asia and which the Afro-Asian countries have to solve now; and, thirdly, that the state became the leading element of the social transformations both in Central Asia and in the present-day East. Last but not least, by themselves the tremendous achievements of the Central Asian republics draw attention to the time the land and water reform was carried out there. It is here that the search is one for the answer to the main question — how did it become possible within a historically brief period of time to raise the backward and downtrodden Central Asian countryside to the present level?

Mention should be made first of all of the well-considered agrarian policy of the CPSU that organically merged the economic and sociopolitical tasks of the agrarian transformations. In Central Asia these measures of transformation were truly all-embracing ones. The measures to eradicate big land ownership were combined with measures to advance agriculture, to develop the infrastructure, to establish links between town and countryside. Parallel to this intensive work was conducted to create mass peasant organizations, to emancipate

women, root out illiteracy, etc.

The scope of the agrarian transformations, their close interconnection determined the successful outcome of the agrarian policy. In the light of this one has to note that in the Afro-Asian countries of capitalist development the ruling circles are deliberately narrowing the front of these transformations.

The absence of comprehensiveness in agrarian transformations is one of the manifestations of the limited character of these reforms. Even in those developing states that have chosen the road of socialist orientation and implement extensive agrarian reforms the method of carrying out these transformations remains a bottleneck. With the existence of peasant associations quite often bureaucratic methods are still widespread and exert a negative impact on the political activity of the masses struggling for a better future for their country. In these conditions it is often difficult to crush the clandestine resistance of those social forces whose interests are affected by the reforms.

In carrying out agrarian transformations the developing countries experience considerable objective difficulties caused by the scarcity of the available material, technical and financial means, the shortage and low qualification of personnel. It is more important in such a situation to correctly define the priority and interdependence of tasks and to make skillful use of available resources. The USSR's experience in this respect is extremely valuable.

In the course of transformations in Turkestan each subsequent step organically stemmed from the previous one so that the process of change became irreversible. Relations of land tenure (prohibition of the sale, purchase and rent of land and of eviction of those who till it) were transformed at the first stage, the system of contracting was introduced for cotton-growers, giving the Soviet state a direct contact with the peasants. National inequality in land ownership was eliminated at the second stage (the ownership of rich Russian colonists was sharply restricted) and the priority was given to organizing and mobilizing the toiling peasantry. The third stage was marked by the liquidation of feudal land ownership, and the creation of the necessary organizational preconditions for the forming of cooperatives of poor and middle peasants.

Such, in our view, are the essential lessons of the "Central Asian experience" of agrarian transformations that can be of indubitable interest to the developing countries of the East. At the same time it is necessary to stress that the ultimate success of this example was guaranteed by the clear-cut class thrust of the agrarian policy of the Soviet state, by its consistent protection of the interests of the toiling peasantry. In many developing countries this decisive precondition of success is still absent. It is only in countries of socialist orientation that favorable preconditions are gradually taking shape for ensuring it. And it is not by chance that it is in these states that the experience of the Central Asian republics of the USSR attracts the greatest attention.

The program and practice of the "agrarian revolution" in Algeria are proof

of this. One can detect many "familiar" features in it: genuine comprehensiveness, accent on social tasks, attempts to form mass peasant organizations, efforts to eliminate regional socioeconomic disproportions providing for the more rapid development of backward areas (this, too, was one of the principles of the Leninist Party's agrarian policy in Central Asia and Kazakhstan), the organization of production associations of *fellahs*. The influence of the Soviet experience is likewise clearly felt in such countries as Democratic Yemen, Afghanistan, Angola and Ethiopia.

Political Development

The historic experience of state development in the outlying regions of the Soviet Union is of invaluable importance for the present national liberation struggle of the peoples. Outlining the main laws and specific features of national state development, Lenin stressed that the more flexible, more cautious, more attentive approach to the local specifics of the revolutionary movement in Central Asia pressingly requires the establishment of the strongest political alliance of Communists with revolutionary democrats and all non-party revolutionaries.

Lenin regarded the Soviets of working people as the most rational gradual transitional form of bringing the broad masses to the high ideals of socialism. He wrote: "... peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a weapon which can be employed, not only in capitalist countries but also in countries with pre-capitalist relations."

And also:

"The idea of Soviet organization is a simple one, and is applicable not only to proletarian, but also to peasant and feudal semi-feudal relations. . . ."⁶

Lenin's idea about non-proletarian revolutionary Soviets found its concrete confirmation in the practice of the national-democratic revolutions in Bukhara and Khiva and the setting up of popular peasants' Soviets in these ethnic areas for the first time in the history of the Central Asian republics. It was a characteristic feature of the Soviets of working people that they relied on the democratic aspirations of the broad popular masses and drew them into the creation of the mainstays of the subsequent transition to socialism.

Peasants', communal, clan and other people's Soviets, best adapted to conditions of pre-bourgeois social relations, were formed under the guidance of Communists in the other parts of the Soviet East (Kirghizia, Turkmenia, etc.). Such bodies of revolutionary power, especially in the most backward cattle-breeding areas, often had to flexibly combine on the basis of transitional measures the solution of urgent tasks of national-democratic and people's democratic transformations. Thereby the Soviets, which were formed with due consideration for clan and tribal organization, played the role of transitional intermediate link on the way to higher forms of Soviet organizations.

The formation of the state apparatus, both legislative and executive, predominantly from native personnel did much to promote the deepening of the revolutionary transformations in the national areas of the USSR. The appointment and education of personnel from among the local population decisively facilitated the bringing of the apparatus of power closer to the popular masses, and invigorated the activity of local party, trade union, youth, cooperative, women's and other mass organizations.

The very flexible and far-sighted principle of forming the first people's bodies of revolutionary power in Central Asia is of unquestionable interest in this connection. Some loyal representatives of the propertied exploiter strata were also admitted to the newly-formed local Soviets. It was only with the growth of the class self-consciousness of the working peasants that the people's Soviets fully went over into the hands of the toiling masses. All this enabled Soviet power to lay the foundation for the national state formations (republics, regions, areas, etc.) to join the centralized multinational socialist state.

The historic experience of the Soviet state has convincingly shown that it is only the internationalistic approach that deeply combines general laws and specifics which makes it possible to eliminate antagonistic interethnic conflicts and contradictions and to achieve a true liberation and flourishing of all the formerly oppressed nations and nationalities. As the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 25th Party Congress noted "the atmosphere of genuine collectivism and comradeship, cohesion and the friendship of all big and small nations in the country, which gain in strength from day to day, and the moral health which makes us strong and steadfast — these are the radiant facets of our way of life, these are the great gains of socialism that have become the very lifeblood of our reality."⁷

The experience of socialist transformations in Soviet Central Asia is especially important for the newly-free countries of socialist orientation. Let us take, for example, such an aspect of the problem as the transformation of the state-political system in states following the non-capitalist way of development.

On coming to power, the revolutionary-democratic regimes encounter a need to fundamentally reform the archaic superstructure institutions that retard social progress. This is manifested in the dismantling of the old state machine, the renovation of elements of the national democratic state, or their creation anew if they are absent (organization of the local and central bodies of power, parliament or other representative institutions, etc.), the formation of a party or parties, and public organizations. The drafting and adoption of a constitution, which usually institutes a system of representative bodies of power, is an important stage in the consolidation of the revolutionary-democratic state.

The practice of revolutionary-democratic transformations in the countries of socialist orientation generates a multitude of state-political forms which, in the

final analysis, are determined by the national specific conditions in each state. In some countries one-party regimes have been introduced (Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, etc.), in others, the multi-party political system was retained. However, in both instances guidance of socio-political processes is effected by revolutionary-democratic elements united not only by a common world outlook and convictions but also by party affiliation.

The state-political system in the countries of socialist orientation — and herein lies their fundamental distinction from those developing countries that chose the capitalist way of development — is created in such forms and is upgraded in such a direction as to ensure the broad participation of the working masses in the management of social processes. The experience of socialist development in the Soviet Central Asian republics, and also the experience of the Afro-Asian countries themselves accumulated in the course of several decades of independent development, convincingly shows that disregard for the pressing interests of the popular masses, manifestations of "fear of the masses," attempts to carry out revolutionary transformations in isolation from their initiative, strengthen objectively the counterrevolutionary forces, lead to an internal degeneration of the revolutionary-democratic regime. Such phenomena were unfortunately observed in a number of countries that renounced socialist orientation (Egypt, Somalia, etc.) and were among the main causes of the reactionary changes in them.

Instructive experience in the political mobilization of the masses has been accumulated by vanguard parties of working people espousing scientifically-socialist positions (in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, etc.). In those countries democratic organizations of the masses are an important link between the party and the people. The policy-making documents of such parties as FRELIMO and the MPLA regard them as the main instrument of expanding and strengthening the people's anti-imperialist front, as a school for the molding and consolidation of the consciousness of the masses, as a source of replenishing the party's ranks, as the most important means of drawing the population into social life and of preserving the mass nature of the national movement. The task is being set of encouraging the masses to form organizations to protect their specific interests and to enhance their development.

As the countries of socialist orientation develop, it is natural that the Marxist-Leninist theory of state and revolution is being enriched and new forms of power of the people are coming into being. Thus, having resolved not to copy the bourgeois political system's institutions the MPLA and FRELIMO put the emphasis on the utmost development of those forms of the activity and initiative of the masses that came into being when the administration of liberated areas was being organized. These forms varied depending on conditions. As the prominent African revolutionary Eduardo Mondlane once noted, in some places the functions of government were given to party bodies, in other places

they were discharged by various public organizations, specifically, by cooperatives, while in still other places they were discharged even by tribal chiefs if they supported the liberation movement.

The task of upgrading the state-political system and of further democratizing public life is being set forth in the program documents of the vanguard and revolutionary democratic parties as one of the most important and urgent tasks of the current stage. At the same time one cannot but see that for various reasons the fulfillment of this task is encountering certain difficulties, both objective and subjective. This is due first of all to the existence of an external threat (posed by imperialist forces) to most countries of socialist orientation, to the existence in some of them of unsolved acute national problems, and sometimes to certain errors in the socioeconomic policy, to the already mentioned individual manifestations of "fear of the masses," etc. But these difficulties and unresolved problems are not insurmountable obstacles on the road to socialism, to the most developed forms of socialist power by the people. It is clear that with the overcoming of these difficulties and mistakes, the truly revolutionary potential of the states of socialist orientation will strengthen as well as the effectiveness of their advance along the road of socialist transformation of society.

The developing countries which have won their independence in the recent past from the yoke of colonialism and semi-colonialism are facing the task of forming new social relations not only in the political and economic spheres but in the realm of culture as well. The experience of the Soviet East, which has successfully effected the transition from the pre-capitalist formation to the socialist, bypassing capitalism, is of lasting value in this regard.

Evening out the levels of cultural development and heightening social homogeneity in the republics of the Soviet East has not in the least meant erasing their cultural and national and ethnic identity. Quite the opposite is true: socialist cultural transformations became a solid and reliable bedrock for the flourishing of the national traditions of the peoples of the Soviet East.

At the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe held in Berlin in June 1976 Leonid Brezhnev pointed to the great importance of studying the experience of building socialism in a wide range of conditions, underscoring the need to analyze and generalize the experience amassed, all the more so since aside from the inimitable national specifics there invariably exist common features which are of great interest. National specifics are deeply rooted in national traditions, the cultural heritage of the past. The interaction of the traditional and the contemporary is indubitably one of the foremost problems of social development.

All this, of course, does not exhaust all the aspects of the experience of the Soviet Eastern republics that are crucial from the viewpoint of the present problems of the developing countries. At the same time it should not be

forgotten that the process of development of the Soviet East had some favorable preconditions that are absent in most of the present Afro-Asian states — first of all the existence of a revolutionary proletarian government in the “center” and the material, political and ideological possibilities stemming from the existence of such a centralized leadership. In this sense the development problems of the present-day developing countries have their own specific complexities.

In addition to this, one can recall Lenin's well-known words to the effect that “the subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess much vaster populations and a much vaster diversity of social conditions, will undoubtedly display greater distinctions than the Russian revolution.”⁸ From this point of view the present epoch of the drawing of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America into world history has unique features that can be fully brought forth only by actual historical practice. At the same time there is no road, nor can there be any, to socialism that bypasses the common laws discovered by Marxism-Leninism and confirmed by the historic experience of the USSR. World history since the October Revolution provides daily confirmations of this truth. □

Notes

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3. Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin 1967, p.224.
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DANIEL ROSENBERG

Transatlantic Solidarity: Soviet Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean

The USSR's relations with developing countries must be seen in the context of the coexistence of two social systems, the capitalist and the socialist. It has always been Soviet policy to pursue normal, stable, cordial relations with others. But the degree and form of Western corporate influence over a developing country and its people's consequent resistance influence the tendency and ability of that nation to establish trade and normal contacts with the Soviet Union.

Latin American colonial history and independence struggles are older and different from those of Africa and Asia. Trading and enterprising French, Spanish, British and Dutch colonialists and their upperclass descendants wiped out most of the aboriginal peoples and established the unrivaled enslavement of human life in the Americas. Later, geographical closeness to Wall Street and Washington interacted with a developing imperialist exploitation to create an especially difficult context for the evolution of Soviet-Latin American relations through the present day.

The social, political and economic life of Latin America is more intensely dominated than that of Asia and Africa by the military and cultural values of Wall Street, though not without fierce resistance in the region. Anti-communism is more concentrated there; CIA machinations, for example, via the labor movement and the AFL-CIO sponsored American Institute for Free Labor Development, are more extensive. US ruling circles view Latin America and the Caribbean as “backyard” and “basin,” mere receptacles for investment and profit. Yet US aid to military dictators belies the apparent reliability of the region for exploitation.

In general, then, Soviet relations — diplomatic, trade, economic, scientific, cultural, sports, medical research — with Latin America and the Caribbean face special problems. Yet the USSR, seeking to coexist peacefully with capitalist countries, has historically sought and maintained those contacts wherever and whenever possible.

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The Historical Background

Between 1810 and 1826 the great majority of Latin American countries won formal independence from Spain, Portugal, France, Holland and Britain. Most of the republics created were only nominally independent, and remain so to this day. The region still has full-fledged colonies: Puerto Rico (US), Martinique and Guadeloupe (France), French Guiana and others.

In the late 19th century, US imperialism opened a new chapter in Latin America's exploitation for profit. It defended its investments and prevented the accession to power of movements for real independence and progress, through outright military intervention, *de jure* and *de facto* annexation and political manipulation. For most of this century, Latin American countries have had the same general features: poorly developed industries; one or two crop agricultural systems, extremes of wealth and poverty, harsh political repression against trade unions and social movements; widespread illiteracy and malnutrition; and predominant influence of US big business. The Second Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions observed in 1949 that the "most far-reaching" change undergone by Latin American countries was "the increase of their economic dependence upon the . . . United States of America."

Despite contravening pressures, several Latin American countries did respond to early Soviet initiatives for normal relations. Mexico recognized the Soviet Union in 1924; Soviet-Mexican trade began in the late 1920s. But Mexico broke off relations with the USSR in 1930, suddenly and without explanation, causing Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov to state: "It can only be assumed that the Mexican Government in the given case acted under the pressure of external forces."¹ Diplomatic ties were later re-established. Uruguay recognized the USSR in 1926; full diplomatic relations followed in 1933 but were broken in 1935 under similar circumstances. Earlier, in 1927, athletes from Uruguay and Argentina took part in the First National Soviet Sports Festival.²

The USSR developed a modest trade with Mexico, Chile and Argentina in the 1920s. In exchange for \$50,000 worth of exports to Mexico in 1928, the Soviets received \$15,000 worth of coffee. The USSR obtained iodine and nitrates from Chile and wool and skins from Argentina. Despite the difficulties, Soviet people demonstrated strong feelings of solidarity with peoples abroad, including Latin Americans, fighting to improve their lives. The writer Louis Fischer reported in 1930:

The Soviet press and the Soviet public always pay more than usual attention to strikes and labor conflicts throughout the world. If it be a walkout of several thousand in Gastonia, North Carolina, or a lockout in Chile, or a seamen's contest in Australia, the news is featured in Communist dailies. . . . Bolshevik enthusiasm and help are not confined to the strikers of any single country. They overleap boundaries and take no

notice of race, color or profession. Here the Bolsheviks give their best and most irrefutable demonstration of international class solidarity. The worker in the Donetz Coal Basin feels a kinship with the miner in South Wales, and the Moscow spinner with the Ruhr blaster. They participate spiritually and mentally in the affairs of the foreign proletariat.³

During the 1930s Latin Americans participated fully in the anti-fascist effort. Democratic struggles resulted in development of broad coalitions in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, Nicaragua, Cuba, Venezuela and elsewhere; in several areas they won electoral victories. Salvador Allende became Minister of Public Health in the Popular Front slate which won the Chilean election of 1938. Cuban and Argentinian volunteers fought in the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War.

Latin America's participation in the world anti-fascist movement resulted in a somewhat less hostile view of the USSR by the various regimes. Thus, during World War II a host of countries established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union: Cuba (1942), Nicaragua (1944), Brazil (1945), Bolivia (1945), Guatemala (1945), the Dominican Republic (1945), Costa Rica (1944), Ecuador (1945), Argentina (1946) and Uruguay (1943). The Second World War somewhat diluted anti-communism in Latin America and the Caribbean, and helped promote democratic thinking and activity. Guyanese independence leader Cheddi Jagan remembered: "At that time, anti-communism was not fashionable as it is today; those were the halcyon days of cooperation between the USSR, the USA and the United Kingdom."⁴

But massive cold war pressures from Washington interrupted Soviet-Latin American contacts. Many nations broke diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in the late 1940s and 1950s: Cuba, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Venezuela and others. (Later, during the post-cold war detente, a large number of Latin American countries established or re-established those relations; in 1969-70 alone, these included Bolivia, Guyana, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Peru and Venezuela.)

Minimal trade persisted during the difficult 1950s, particularly with Argentina, which signed a trade agreement with the USSR in 1953. Under Juan Peron, Argentina exchanged trade delegations with the Soviet Union in the early 1950s. Trade faltered following Peron's overthrow (1955) but soon picked up again. Other nations trading with the Soviets in the 1950s were Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, but here, trade was microscopic and other contacts — scientific, cultural and other exchanges — nonexistent.⁵

The Caribbean countries generally remained in colonial hands longer than most territories of the Western hemisphere. Aside from the few countries liberated from colonialism long ago (Cuba — 1902, Haiti — 1804, Dominican Republic — 1844) most did not achieve independence until quite recently: Guyana, 1966; Trinidad and Tobago, 1962; Barbados, 1966; Grenada, 1974;

Bahamas, 1973; Suriname, 1975; St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 1979; St. Lucia, 1979; Antigua, 1982. So long as they were colonized, the Caribbean countries could obviously not engage in normal state-to-state relations with the Soviet Union, nor determine their own policy. They were and continue to be restricted by physical proximity to the headquarters of imperialism. Many states in the region must rely on US tourism as their main source of income.

Cuba

With the help of the USSR, one Latin American country, Cuba, broke out of the confines of serving US interests, and thereby turned imperialism on its ear in the region. From Year One, the Cuban revolution grappled with basic problems faced by the society. Rents were cut, discrimination outlawed, utility costs slashed, certain monopolies nationalized. It tackled unemployment, prostitution, begging, gambling, racism, illiteracy. As Fidel Castro described the situation at the time of the revolution in 1959, Cuba was "a US colony economically." Decisive resources remained under US business control, yet "an entirely new situation" took shape as Cuba pursued social progress. After the agrarian reform law was enacted in May 1959, "the United States began to take the first steps in mounting a military operation against Cuba; it was even less prepared to tolerate socialism in our country."⁶

In light of the ensuing economic war — blockade, embargo, elimination of fuel deliveries, a ban on exports of food and medicine, etc. — the perseverance and courage of Cubans was fundamental to keeping their nation on the track of real independence.

US aggression became far more than economic. On more than one occasion US soldiers and mercenaries shed Cuban blood; US officials contemplated killing Castro. They poisoned food, destroyed goods and threatened full-scale onslaught.

At the Party Congress in 1976, Fidel Castro recalled:

Without the resolute, firm and generous help of the Soviet people, our country could not have survived the confrontation with imperialism. They bought our sugar when our market was brutally cut off by the United States; they provided us with raw materials and fuel that we would have been unable to purchase anywhere else; they gave us free of charge the weapons with which we fought the mercenaries at Giron [Bay of Pigs] and equipped our revolutionary armed forces so as to make any direct aggression from the United States as costly as possible; they gave extraordinary support to our economy in the critical years of the economic blockade. Thousands upon thousands of Soviet military specialists and technicians helped train our armed forces, or supported virtually every branch of our economy with their assistance.⁷

As early as February 1960, the USSR and Cuba signed a five-year trade agreement ensuring purchases of Cuban sugar in exchange for Soviet goods and

extension of \$100 million worth of credits for Cuba to buy plant and other equipment. That agreement was Cuba's first ever based on equality of the signatories and mutual benefit. It gave Cuba a guaranteed market for a million tons of unrefined sugar every year. The agreement, which has been renewed and extended, protects Cuba from price fluctuations on the world market and makes economic planning easier; it helps ensure a basis for improving living standards.

Soviet technicians, physicians, teachers, scientists, architects, engineers, sports coaches and dancers have assisted the progress of every facet of Cuban life. Cuba owes much of its fishing, nickel, chemical, metal-working, machine parts and other industries to aid received from the Soviet Union. Moreover, Cuba has had an impact on Soviet life, has found a place in Soviet life and culture.

If Soviet-Cuban relations are now relations between socialist countries, it is also due in great part to the USSR's response to Cuba's request for means of self-defense — missiles — at the moment of impending US armed intervention in 1962. With the US Sixth and Seventh Fleets alerted for transit to the Caribbean, with various US air-borne, armored and infantry divisions ready for attack, the Soviet compliance with Cuba's request for aid forced the hotheads to think twice and to retreat; consequently the missiles were removed.

Cuba transformed the relationship between the United States and Latin America. A nation's attitude to dialogue, trade or contacts with Cuba became a measure of fidelity to US policy. Over time, a number of nations were to join Mexico, despite Washington and the Organization of American States, in developing normal relations with Cuba, from diplomatic ties to trade to projects of industrial construction.

Cuba showed that true independence from corporate domination could be attained. Latin Americans could see for themselves, as the British writer Jack Woddis pointed out, that Soviet relations with developing countries "rest on an entirely different basis than that between developing countries and the West. There are no private monopoly firms in the socialist countries which can invest in the Third World, seize possession of land and mineral wealth, establish their own enterprises overseas, and so rob the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America of billions of pounds every year."⁸

As Woddis points out, socialist credits are provided at one-third the interest of Western credits to developing nations; these go to governments, not to private interests and thus facilitate planning; loans are repayable over far greater periods of time; emphasis is laid on projects such as energy, iron, steel, benefiting actual economic development.⁹

Cuba broke the smooth surface of nominally independent neocolonies nurtured in the very garden of Washington's "backyard." It pointed to another path. The late Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana noted: "The existence of the socialist

nations makes it impossible to enforce the full rigor of the neocolonialist system. The existence of an alternative system is itself a challenge to the neocolonialist regime. Warnings about 'the danger of communist subversion' are likely to be two-edged, since they bring to the notice of those living under a neocolonialist system the possibility of a change of regime."¹⁰

Nicaragua

Nicaragua shows the force of the Cuban and Cuban-Soviet example. When the Reagan administration suspended aid to Nicaragua early in 1981, the Soviet Union donated 20,000 tons of grain and loaned "two transport helicopters to ferry food, medical supplies and literacy teams to remote villages" (*The New York Times*, April 26, 1981). That year Nicaragua and the Soviet Union signed a cultural and scientific exchange agreement entailing "the development of cooperation between the two countries in science, medical care, and in the training of qualified personnel for Nicaragua's national economy" (*Ecotass*, January 5, 1981).

The first Nicaraguan delegation to visit the USSR, less than a year after the Sandinistas came to power, returned home with a major trade and technical assistance accord featuring Soviet assistance to hydropower development and geological surveys of Nicaragua's mineral resources. Further, the Sandinist National Liberation Front established party-to-party contacts with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Two years later, the USSR and Nicaragua initialled new agreements for the delivery of Soviet machinery and equipment, and assistance to Nicaragua's communications system, mining and equipment. A five year trade accord guarantees Soviet purchases of Nicaraguan coffee, cotton and sugar. No longer are Nicaragua's labor and resources subject to the whims of US-based corporations and their local representatives. Small wonder, then, that imperialism is attempting to remove the new Nicaragua from the scene physically as well as economically.

Grenada

Like Nicaragua, Grenada also had a repressive regime before its revolution. The Gairy government conducted fraudulent elections, persecuted the opposition New Jewel Movement and collaborated openly with the Chilean dictatorship in military training and torture techniques. Grenada, a major spice exporter, was a thoroughly dependent country and shared last place in the region with Haiti in per capita income.

With Gairy's overthrow in March 1979, the New Jewel Movement headed by Maurice Bishop took steps to break the neocolonial mold. Here, socialist countries, notably Cuba and the USSR, could assist. Not long after the revolution a Soviet trade delegation was invited to Grenada. *The Christian Science*

Monitor (January 21, 1980) suspected the USSR's objective was essentially military, to obtain "Grenadan nutmeg, cocoa and bananas in exchange for Soviet armed vehicles, which the British have refused to supply the new government."

Soviet aid, however, proved to concentrate in the socioeconomic sphere, helping to buttress Grenada's first-ever social measures: free health care and education, abolition of taxes on the poor, distribution of land, construction of housing. Soviet *Niva* machines are at work today on Grenada's mountain roads, while *Belarus* tractors are used on island plantations, and at the same time the Soviet Union indeed buys Grenadan nutmeg. The economic agreements signed in 1980 and 1982 substantially involve basic necessities: in July 1982 the Soviets "granted \$1.4 million for the purchase of 500 tons of steel, 400 tons of flour and other essential goods" and "gave Grenada a ten-year credit of \$7.7 million to buy equipment. . . ." (*The New York Times*, July 29, 1982). The agreements signed during Prime Minister Bishop's visit to Moscow in 1982 included cultural and scientific exchanges and a protocol on supply of goods from 1983 to 1987 (*Pravda*, July 28, 1982).

Foreign business interests have applied the economic squeeze to Grenada: the Reagan administration has prevented Common Market assistance to major construction projects like the new international airport, and has stymied loans to Grenada from international financial institutions. US administration charges that Grenada is a military base for the Soviets and the Cubans are used to substantiate rumors that Grenada threatens US "vital interests" (Grenada's population is 110,000). There is a marked parallel with US charges and actions against others which challenge Washington's "right" to dictate and manipulate the region. Here, too, the Soviet Union is helping Grenada realize *its* rights.*

The USSR and Capitalist Latin American Countries

Despite US fears and consequent actions, many Latin American capitalist countries are developing better relations with the Soviet Union as a result of popular pressures for democratization, or a push to develop other avenues of economic development and cooperation. Sometimes these are interwoven; at times the governments seeking greater independence from US big business are

* Grenada's true independence, sustained by popular support and assisted by international friendship, fell victim in October 1983 to criminal invasion by the Reagan administration. Efforts are now underway to reverse every social gain made under the revolutionary government and to recolonize Grenada. But the experience of political and economic self-determination, assisted by international solidarity, struck roots and sent messages far more durable than Reaganism.

reactionary ones. There are different tendencies and policies are often contradictory. But a survey indicates the overall direction is toward breaking out of the old sphere. The focus has been on economic ties. Other aspects of state-to-state relations are generally less developed.

Among countries having significant, ongoing relations of trade and other economic cooperation with the Soviet Union are Columbia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Jamaica and Guyana.

Mexican officials have given unqualified endorsement to enlarging contacts with the Soviet Union. Vincente Fuentes Diaz, former general secretary of the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party, recently noted that "Each country, including Mexico, which has experienced pressure from without, pressure that was particularly strong during the cold war, finds international detente highly conducive to the fulfillment of its development plan and the strengthening of its economic and political position."

Mexico employs Soviet tractors: the parts are assembled in Mexico under a ten-year agreement with a Mexican government company, Siden. Four thousand such tractors are now in use. Mexico also buys turbodrills for oil drilling, metal-cutting tools and textile machines, and sells coffee, vegetables, fiber for polishing cut glass and other items to the USSR.

Mexico is one of several countries to establish an intergovernmental trade commission with the USSR. Others have agreements with their Soviet counterparts, as does the Peruvian Chamber of Commerce.

Soviet-Peruvian relations developed markedly over the past decade, though the present civilian government follows a more conservative policy than did its immediate predecessors. Back in the mid-1970s Peru purchased arms from the USSR and some time later awarded the highest Peruvian decorations to Leonid Brezhnev, Alexey Kosygin and Andrey Gromyko for contributions to Soviet-Peruvian friendship and cooperation.

However, US corporate influence in Peru continues to increase. US firms account for nearly 70 per cent of foreign investments, particularly in the automobile, mining and oil industries. In 1981 the state-owned oil company, PetroPeru, turned over to Superior Oil of the US the vast oil-bearing areas on the border with Ecuador.

Despite this, Soviet economic cooperation with Peru eclipses that with most other Latin American capitalist countries. Aside from trade, and Soviet assistance to the fish processing, iron and steel industries, the USSR and Peru are engaged in a huge hydropower-irrigation project rivaling the Aswan Dam in Egypt in character and significance. The Olmos irrigation complex in the north is intended to bring the waters of several major rivers from the eastern Andes to the arid Pacific coast. It will feature three dams, reservoirs, a twelve-and-a-half mile tunnel, two hydropower stations generating 600,000 kw., and facilities to irrigate 20 million acres. Cutting Peruvian expenses for food imports, the

irrigation project has the potential to yield annually 250,000 tons of corn and sorghum, 50,000 tons of rice, 350,000 tons of sugar cane and huge quantities of other crops.

The Olmos complex will improve the welfare of 300,000 people in the north. Thousands of jobs will be created. Payment for the services and equipment will take place over a ten-year span at a very low rate of interest. Finally, the project ensures training of Peruvian technicians and establishment of a training center in Peru.

Brazil and Argentina

The relations of the Soviet Union with two particular Latin American nations, Argentina and Brazil, merit special attention. Soviet interparliamentary, trade, cultural, economic and other contacts with them far exceed those with any other capitalist countries in the region. Dominated by US big business, Argentina and Brazil have more developed industry, a more developed class of capitalists than the other nations of Latin America and the Caribbean. Both have a huge population, a large work force, a powerful trade union movement, and popular democratic and left trends including strong communist parties. Together they account for nearly 90 per cent of all Soviet trade with capitalist Latin America.

Nearly ten years ago, Argentina and the USSR initialled a major agreement on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation, and on delivery of Soviet machinery to Argentina. Today, Argentina is the leading capitalist Latin American trading partner of the Soviet Union, and the sixth leading capitalist partner on a world scale. Almost 80 per cent of its crop exports go to the Soviet Union: soybeans, sorghum, barley, wheat, corn. The USSR also receives meat, wool, linseed oil, shoes, medicine and clothing from Argentina. Significantly, Argentina refused to go along with the grain embargo promoted by the Carter Administration after the so-called Soviet "invasion" of Afghanistan in 1979. Despite US pressure, the two countries signed an agreement in 1980 for delivery of four million tons of corn and sorghum and 500,000 tons of soybeans a year from 1980 to 1985.

Soviet exports are particularly directed to heavy industries: machinery, turbines, generators for hydroelectric and thermal power stations. Argentina is the second Latin American country after Columbia to employ Soviet vehicles for mass transit. The Soviet design for a hydropower complex on the Pirana River (Latin America's second longest) also includes a massive dam to protect vast areas from flooding and to improve navigation.

The Malvinas (Falkland Islands) crisis in the spring of 1982 destroyed certain illusions about the trustworthiness of US imperialism. Argentina (one of the few Latin American nations with diplomatic relations with Cuba) received full

support for its claim to the islands from countries and movements from which it had always been politically distant: the Soviet Union, other socialist nations and the nonaligned states. The crisis gave impetus to democratic struggles within the country. Spurred by massive pressure, Argentina withdrew from Honduras troops that had been based there to intimidate Nicaragua in accord with US policy. The crisis revealed and deepened splits within the ruling military. Strong points were undoubtedly scored by those within and outside government who opposed reliance upon and orientation toward Washington. Millions perceived the tie between a more independent foreign policy and internal democratization.

Brazilian developments reveal similar pressures and trends. A powerful popular movement for new policies benefiting the Brazilian people instead of US corporations pushes circles within the reactionary regime to favor closer ties with socialist countries and support for liberation movements. There has been a marked intensification of Brazil was among the first to recognize), as well as Libya, Algeria, the People's Republic of the Congo, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, all of which pursue a noncapitalist road of development."

Brazilian-Soviet relations have grown tremendously. Brazil participated in the Moscow Olympics, and defied the US embargo on selling grain to the Soviet Union. The two nations have exchanged delegations of their respective parliaments. An intergovernmental commission meets regularly to assess and extend trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation. The chambers of commerce of the two countries conduct conferences, symposia and trade exhibitions.

Among the highlights of their economic cooperation is Soviet assistance in constructing the massive Sobradinho Hydroelectric Power Station, including a dam facilitating irrigation, fishing, and flood control. The project has provided 9,000 jobs in an area hitherto called the "drought range." The USSR also helped build the turbine-power Capivara Station on the Paranapanema River. The Soviets export machine tools, fertilizer and medicines to Brazil and receive, in turn, many agricultural products including coffee and cocoa.

The first comprehensive Brazil-USSR trade package, in 1981, was valued at over \$6 billion and included purchases of Soviet oil, sale of soy beans, corn and cocoa to the USSR, and Soviet technical assistance in drilling research.

Brazil and Argentina are not immune from the struggles and processes expressed by the demand for a new international economic order, a demand that would be impossible without the existence of the socialist states which offer the developing countries a non-exploitive, equitable and beneficial alternative to the exploitive relations that have previously been the rule. Yet these countries have reactionary regimes. Progressive, democratic, trade union, youth and communist activities have been hindered, persecuted or repressed. Does Soviet

diplomacy—in this case normalization of relations with nations that have been classic victims, and ruled by classic creatures, of imperialism—contradict the interests of the peoples of those lands? The world anti-imperialist movement, at the heart of which is the Soviet Union shapes the form of contacts by the Soviet Union with this or that state, in the spirit of the principle of peaceful coexistence.

The world and domestic democratic movements call for isolation of racist apartheid and the extension of all forms of solidarity to the people of Southern Africa. The USSR leads this effort and registers its solidarity with guns. The world struggles call for sanctions and boycotts in some cases, and for different forms of solidarity in other cases. Soviet radio and books have been an instrument of solidarity. Book exhibitions and cultural centers in Latin American countries acquaint millions of people with Soviet reality and Marxist ideas. The Chilean Communists recalled in 1977: "Let's imagine for a moment how much more difficult our struggle would have been if Radio Moscow did not exist. The USSR has put into the hands of our people a powerful and long-range weapon."¹²

The militant anti-government democratic movements in Brazil and Argentina, and the Communists in particular, have not called for international boycotts and sanctions. It is no accident that these movements have always supported contacts with the Soviet Union as a way of weakening reliance on imperialism and strengthening democratic consciousness. That coexistence has never been bought at the sacrifice of solidarity is proved by the insistent State Department demand for "linkage" of arms cuts negotiations to reduction of Soviet aid to freedom struggles. In his report to the 25th Congress of the CPSU, Leonid Brezhnev recalled:

Some bourgeois leaders affect surprise and raise a howl over the solidarity of Soviet people with the struggle of other people for freedom and progress. This is either outright naivete, or more likely a deliberate befuddling of minds. It could not be clearer, after all, that detente and peaceful coexistence have to do with interstate relations. This means, above all, that disputes between countries are not to be settled by war, by the use or threat of force. . . . No one should expect that because of the detente, communists will reconcile themselves with capitalist exploitation, or that monopolists will become followers of the revolution. . . . As for the ultraleftists' assertions that peaceful coexistence is the next thing to "helping capitalism" and "freezing the sociopolitical status quo," our reply is this: Every revolution is above all a natural result of the given society's internal development.

The growth of Soviet-Latin American relations occurs under tremendous pressure from imperialism, particularly when those relations go beyond mere recognition or diplomatic ties to economic cooperation and scientific and social exchange. Today, US military "advisers" proliferate in certain countries,

assisting in the attempted suffocation of popular movements, while new, more sophisticated initiatives seek to blackmail regional leaders to back US policies. Barbadian Prime Minister Tom Adams, hardly a radical, pointedly remarked: "... It is not my intention to argue that Soviet influence in the Caribbean, or anywhere else, for that matter, should or should not be feared, but I do assert without apology that Caribbean countries should *not* be required first to present evidence of imminent communist subversion before qualifying for a US commitment to alleviating, by whatever means, their economic and social circumstances."¹³

That Soviet-Latin American relations are growing suggests that US policy-makers cannot keep pace with continental developments and struggles. Healthy relations with the USSR, expressive of significant internal and international movements and influences, relations that exceed the perfunctory, indicate that many Latin American regimes are compelled to rethink their relations with Washington. Though US political, economic and ideological domination prevails here as nowhere else, imperialism is unable to run things as it used to.

The USSR has extended the experience of creating equality and unity among nations and peoples to its foreign policy. The options for greater independence interact with the fight for freedom within Latin American countries. That the pace of continental change is quickening is due in no small part to the policy of solidarity and peaceful coexistence practiced by the Soviet Union. □

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MARILYN BECHTEL

The USSR and Countries of Africa and Asia

Soviet policy toward developing countries of Africa and Asia has several facets: political, economic, social and cultural, and military assistance. Its basic premise is support for newly independent and still colonized peoples in their struggle to achieve full and meaningful independence from the former colonial powers. This support extends to countries which at present are taking a capitalist path of development—including some which have quite reactionary governments—as well as to the increasing number of countries which are taking a noncapitalist path or are explicitly oriented to socialism. Naturally, relations with the latter are warmer and more extensive.

This policy is directly related to Soviet policy within the USSR in quickly bringing up to the economic, political, social and cultural level of the rest of the country those areas in the Soviet Union which were terribly oppressed colonies under the tsars. Though its effects have been much more widespread in the period since World War II, its outlines became evident immediately after the October Revolution.

The essence of the policy is the accordance of fair, equitable and mutually beneficial treatment in all aspects of the relationship between nations. Besides the mutual benefit which a relationship built on the premise of equality brings to both sides, such a relationship provides an alternative which helps developing countries to break away from their former absolute dependence on their ex-colonial masters.

Many volumes have been written about the USSR's policy toward the peoples of the two vast continents, Africa and Asia. The present chapter will discuss the underlying principles of this policy, highlight ways in which it has been expressed concretely, and feature some examples of its application in relation to societies of different types and levels of development on both continents.

The Early Years

The famous Decree on Peace, issued the day after the victory of the October Revolution, already contained the seeds of Soviet policy toward the large number of colonies and semi-colonies existing at that time, when it stated:

By annexation or seizure of foreign territory the Government understands, in accord-

ance with the sense of justice of democracy in general, and of the laboring classes in particular, the incorporation into a large or powerful State of a small or weak nationality, without the definitely, clearly, and voluntarily expressed consent and desire of this nationality, regardless of when this forcible incorporation took place, regardless also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed or forcibly retained within the frontiers of the given State, and finally, regardless of whether this nation is located in Europe or in distant lands beyond the seas.

If any nation whatsoever is retained as part of a given State by force, if, despite its expressed desire—whether expressed in the press, in popular assemblies, in the decisions of political parties, or by rebellions and insurrections against national oppression, it has not the right of choosing freely—the troops of the annexing or, generally, the more powerful nation being completely withdrawn and without any pressure being brought to bear—the constitutional forms of its national existence, then its incorporation is an annexation, that is, seizure and coercion.

The Government considers it the greatest crime against humanity to continue this war for the sake of dividing among the powerful and wealthy nations the weaker nationalities which they have conquered. . . .¹

The day after that—November 9—a team of revolutionary sailors assigned by the Soviet government opened the files of secret diplomatic papers left by the tsarist regime and began to prepare for publication the most important of the secret treaties. Among them was an agreement between Russia and Britain dividing spheres of influence in Afghanistan, Persia and Tibet. Treaties granting Russia special privileges in other countries were annulled at once.

On December 3, the appeal To All The Working Moslems of Russia and the East called on the people of Africa, Asia and the Middle East suffering under colonial oppression to:

Then overthrow these predators and enslavers of your countries. . . . Cast out these age-old invaders of your lands. Do not let them plunder your smoldering ruins any longer. You must be the masters of your country. You must build your life according to your own image and liking. You have this right, for your future is in your hands.²

One of the first Asian countries with which the Soviet Union developed relations in accord with the new concepts was Afghanistan. Though Afghanistan had successfully fought against becoming a British colony like its giant neighbor, India, it had come under partial British domination in the late nineteenth century. When the reform-minded King Amanullah came to power in 1919, he flung a declaration of a complete independence at the British. They retaliated by starting the Third Afghan-British War, which featured the world's first deliberate bombing of a civilian population. The signing of the First Afghan-Soviet Friendship Treaty in 1921—combined with the drubbing the British had taken as participants in the 14-nation intervention against Soviet Russia and the unrest the October Revolution stimulated among the subject peoples in British India—forced the British to withdraw their troops and issue a

statement recognizing Afghanistan's independence. In the treaty Soviet Russia and Afghanistan pledged to respect each other's independence, and agreed not to enter into any agreement with a third party to the detriment of either's interests. The Soviets agreed to help Afghanistan financially and in other material ways.

Iran was also locked in struggle with Great Britain at that time. The Iranian-Soviet treaty of 1921, which normalized relations between the two countries, had a similar effect. The Soviets renounced all the agreements the tsarist government had forced on Iran, infringing on its rights, and pledged they would not participate in any act which would violate Iran's sovereignty. The two countries agreed not to interfere in each other's internal affairs, nor to allow groups on their territory which aimed to fight against the other country. Soviet Russia also pledged to prevent attacks against Iran by third countries.

Turkey was also an early beneficiary of the new Soviet foreign policy. In the years after World War I, Turkey was threatened by Greek and British intervention. The Turkish-Soviet treaty of 1921 stated that the Soviets would not recognize international acts affecting Turkey which the Turkish government did not recognize. It defined the frontier between the two countries, and the Soviets supported Turkey's rights in complicated international negotiations concerning the Black Sea and the adjacent straits. This agreement was followed by a treaty between Turkey and the Soviet Transcaucasian Republics signed in October 1921, and an agreement between Turkey and the Ukraine concluded in January 1922.

Although the Soviet government was very hard pressed financially in the early 1920s, the agreements with Turkey and Afghanistan included provisions for Soviet aid in the amount of 10 million gold rubles and 620,000 gold rubles respectively, sums which were paid out promptly.

The instructions issued by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to the Soviet envoy in Afghanistan are worth quoting extensively, for they give a well-rounded picture of Soviet principles in relation to developing countries, which continue to hold true today.

Our policy is a policy of peace and cooperation among all peoples. Today, when the Eastern peoples, as economically backward nations, are painfully aware of foreign economic oppression, socialist Soviet Russia is their natural friend.

Our policy in the East is not aggressive. It is a policy of peace and friendship. In your work you must systematically accentuate this basic fact and, in particular, in Kabul make the development of our friendship with Afghanistan your principal aim. Friendship implies mutual assistance and, in keeping with our desire to make every possible contribution to friendly Afghanistan's development and florescence, we are prepared to give it all the assistance in our power in this peaceful area. You must study Afghanistan's needs and requirements and ascertain the wishes of its government so that in the development and fulfillment of the Russo-Afghan treaty we can render it all the

assistance in our power in order to help promote its development and prosperity. You are instructed to pay particularly close attention to the Emir's program of reforms. At Afghanistan's present stage of development, the enlightened absolutist monarchy of the type we had in our country in the eighteenth century is for it a major progressive advance. We cannot and must not approach Afghanistan with the yardstick of economically developed countries. Needless to say, we must not forget for a moment and leave in the shade the enormous distinction between the communist program and the program that is being put into effect and may be implemented by the present Afghan government. We should not for a moment hide our face. But this does not prevent us from stating our sympathy and giving every assistance to the reformist undertakings of the friendly Afghan government and the progressive initiative of the enlightened absolutist monarchy. We do not for a moment become monarchists or adherents of absolutism. This must be obvious to everybody. But we are giving all the assistance we can to the progressive-minded Emir.

You must at all costs avoid the fatal mistake of artificial attempts at planting communism in the country. We tell the Afghan government: you have one system, we have another; we have our ideals, you have yours; however, we are linked by the common aspiration for the complete sovereignty, independence and independent actions of our peoples. We do not interfere in your internal affairs or the independent actions of your people; we assist every development that plays a progressive role in the advancement of your people. We do not for a moment think of imposing on your people a program alien to it at the present stage of their development.³

Until after World War II, virtually all of Africa was colonized by one or another European power. Consequently the record of Soviet relations with countries of Africa in the early years is quite limited.

During this period Egypt was swept by anti-colonial rebellions. These forced the British to grant nominal independence in 1922, though in fact Britain continued to control the country. The Egyptian peasants often called the revolutionary organs they established by the name of "Soviets." In 1924 intensified British pressure brought on a wave of terror against Egypt's progressive forces. A protest campaign was mounted in the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, Georgia and other Soviet republics, and at a mass meeting in Baku in November of that year a Hands-Off Egypt society was launched by people of Azerbaidzhan, Daghestan and Soviet Central Asia together with Turks and Iranians. Through their trade union, Azerbaidzhanian miners issued an appeal to British workers urging them to protest to the Baldwin government against the repression in Egypt.

The Soviet people also supported the Transvaal miners in South Africa against severe police repression in the early 1920s, and expressed solidarity with the Riff Republic in North Africa, which for five years during that decade fought the forces of French and Spanish colonial oppressors. Concerning the latter, the head of the Moroccan Communist Party recalled in 1967 that "Our country was one of the first to feel the fresh wind which the October Revolution

brought into the international working class movement. . . . And if at that time the October Revolution was unable to furnish material assistance to the uprising of the Riffs, it gave it great moral support."⁴

In the field of international diplomacy, the Soviet representatives at major international congresses including those at Genoa (1922) and Lausanne (1922-23) opposed colonialism in general as well as specific agreements imposing colonial or unequal status on particular countries and peoples.

Among the few direct ways the Soviet republic could help the anti-colonial forces of Africa was through education: in the 1920s and 1930s many revolutionary-minded young people from colonial countries, including African countries, studied at Soviet institutions of higher education, including the Communist University for Toilers of the East. Some of these were among the later leaders in African working class and national liberation movements.

As the threat of fascism began to loom large during the 1930s, the Italian government headed by Mussolini attacked Ethiopia, with the support of Germany and Japan and under the screen of a secret agreement with the Laval government in France. The British government embargoed weapons sales to the Ethiopian government, and the US passed a neutrality act prohibiting sale of arms and material to either side. The only country to come to the aid of beleaguered Ethiopia as it was first threatened and then invaded was the USSR, which conducted a vigorous and prolonged struggle in the League of Nations for preservation of Ethiopia's sovereignty, and for effective sanctions against Italy. The USSR supported the Ethiopian people materially as well as diplomatically, assisting them through the Soviet Red Cross, and continued to uphold Ethiopia's right to independence despite the occupation of the country by Italian troops.

The Post-World War II Independence Upsurge

The realignment of forces at the end of the First World War had resulted in a number of countries achieving nominal independence — with a greater or lesser degree of continued control by their former colonial masters. The period after World War II saw the swift breakdown of the old world colonial system, and the progress to political independence of one country after another throughout Africa and Asia. At the end of the war several of the traditional colonial powers — Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands — were weakened by the long struggle against fascism. Subject peoples had been drawn into that struggle to a great degree — the Indochinese and Indonesian peoples against the Japanese, the people of British and French African colonies against Hitler. The forces for independence in these colonies linked their fight against fascism with their struggle to end their colonial status. Just as the struggle three decades before had taken inspiration from the young October Revolution, so the heroic

role of the USSR in World War II inspired freedom fighters throughout Asia and Africa.

Just as it had used its participation in international conferences of various sorts before the war to oppose colonialism, so the USSR from the first incorporated anti-colonial activity into its work at the United Nations. The Soviet Union played an important part in ensuring inclusion of the principle of equality and self-determination of nations in the UN Charter, and in the recognition of the legality of armed struggle as part of the effort to achieve national liberation. It has also consistently put forward the premise that genuine independence for a country must include sovereignty over its natural resources.

The Soviet Union was also instrumental in introducing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples which was passed by the 15th UN General Assembly in 1960. It supported the introduction in 1970 by a group of African and Asian countries of the Program of Action for Complete Realization of the Declaration of Decolonized which included recognition of the right of colonial peoples to fight for their freedom with all the means at their disposal.

In the 1950s and 1960s Soviet trade with developing countries began to increase steadily, and the USSR also began a systematic program of economic and social relations and assistance, at first with a few countries and then extending to a broad range of nations. Soviet trade relations with developing countries have featured long-term agreements, and provide opportunities for these countries to export their manufactured goods, for which they often cannot find a market in capitalist countries. Though trade with the USSR forms a definite minority of foreign trade for most African and Asian countries, it provides a useful alternative when developing countries are being squeezed by developed capitalist trading partners.

The USSR's first post-war agreements for economic and technical cooperation were signed with Egypt in 1958 and with Guinea and Ethiopia in 1959. Now the Soviet Union has economic cooperation agreements with some 70 countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and as many as 1,700 industrial and other economic projects are being built with Soviet assistance.

Among the general provisions of such agreements are the following:

- help in designing, engineering and planning, provision of scientific and technological information, delivery of equipment and machinery with spare parts, and construction materials for projects;
- providing specialists to help build, assemble and operate industrial and other projects, and to prospect for mineral resources;
- aid in setting up national organizations for mineral prospecting, designing, research, etc.;
- help to a country in drawing up socioeconomic development plans and setting up economic administration;

- help in training a country's own personnel including skilled workers and specialists to build and operate projects undertaken with Soviet help;
- provision of advisers and consultants.

All such assistance is directed toward developing the state sector in a country's economy, and enabling it to achieve real economic independence through ability to find and process its own resources. In fact, 90 per cent of the overall volume of Soviet aid goes toward helping countries develop their own independent economies.

Help for countries which are more economically developed, such as Algeria or India, features large industrial and agricultural enterprises, while assistance to less developed countries may begin with small food and light industry enterprises, small experimental state farms, irrigation and power systems, etc.

When materials and services are financed through Soviet long-term credits, terms are designed so that repayment is made from the profits of enterprises. Payments, which begin either at the conclusion of delivery of equipment, or when a project has been put into operation, are made in equal installments over 12 years with 2.5 per cent per year interest on that part of the credit which has been used and not repaid. Repayment may be made in a country's traditional exports and products, including the products of the particular enterprise. This enables developing countries to avoid a drain on their scarce hard currency reserves and makes long-term planning possible without having to take fluctuating interest rates into account.

For example, in 1969 the USSR and Guinea agreed that the Soviets would build a mining complex to extract 2.5 million tons of bauxite and help reconstruct the railway from the mine to the port of Conakry and modernize the ore-loading facilities. The USSR supplied the equipment needed, and extended an 82 million ruble credit to Guinea, which repaid it in 12 equal installments beginning one year after the first delivery of bauxite.

One of the most important aspects of Soviet help is training of local workers, technicians and scientists. Much of this is done at the workplace by the Soviet participants. In addition, the USSR has helped build over 140 educational establishments in various countries and has agreed to build nearly 90 more. Finally, many people from Africa, Asia and Latin America study at Soviet educational institutions—some 40,000 have graduated from Soviet higher schools and technical colleges, including nearly 7,000 from the famous Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow.

An outstanding example of Soviet assistance in building an educational facility in a developing country is the Polytechnical Institute in Conakry, Guinea. Built in 1964, it is the first school of its kind in West Africa. It includes lecture rooms, laboratories, workshops for training in production, and special studies with modern equipment. Designed for 1,500 students, its enrollment topped 2,500 before its tenth anniversary. Departments include physics and

mathematics, civil engineering, electrotechnical studies, geology and mining, agriculture, chemistry and pharmacology, and medicine. Soviet staff members help supervise research in topics vital to the Guinean economy. The Soviet faculty trains Guinean teachers, and some Guinean teachers have studied in the USSR.

Kabul Polytechnical Institute, in the capital city of Afghanistan, was built at about the same time, has a similar structure and function, and occupies a similar central place as the main training ground for scientific and technological personnel in that country.

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The following are some examples of the application of Soviet policies in countries having different histories and socioeconomic conditions.

Angola

Angola is at the vortex of many struggles. Independent only since 1975, its birth was attended by a CIA-sponsored civil war. It is a front-line state experiencing recurrent South African invasions as well as attacks by the South African-sponsored UNITA guerrillas within the country. Angola has proclaimed socialism as its goal, and has set out toward that goal from a starting point as one of the world's poorest countries. Its Portuguese former masters stripped the country economically when they left. Itself aided by the Soviet Union and Cuba, Angola extends important help to the continuing independence struggle of the Namibian people to the south.

Soviet support goes back to the beginning of the armed freedom struggle in Angola in the early 1960s. In 1963 the United Nations passed a Soviet-supported resolution calling on the Portuguese Government to recognize the rights of the colonial peoples it dominated to independence and self-determination. The USSR also supported the recognition by the UN of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the corresponding movements in the other colonies.

In addition, the Soviets provided military assistance to the liberation movements, supplying weapons and training soldiers and officers. The USSR provided substantial amounts of medicine, food and clothing to the people engaged in the liberation struggle, and a number of African people from the colonies attended Soviet universities and other educational institutions.

The USSR recognized the new MPLA government in Angola as soon as independence was proclaimed in November 1975, and formal diplomatic relations were established a few months later. In October 1976 the two countries signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation which provided for "all-round cooperation . . . in the political, economic, trade, scientific, technological, cultural and other fields." The agreement specifically referred to "indus-

try, transport, field and animal husbandry, fishing, the working of natural resources, the development of energetics and communications, . . . the training of national personnel . . . science, art, literature, education, public health" and more.

Among specific projects with which the USSR is assisting are the following: modernization of shipyards at Lobito and reconstruction of ship repair workshops at Benguela; establishment of a repair complex for farm machinery; joint work in cotton growing enabling Angolans to draw on the Uzbek experience to provide top quality cotton for the new textile industry; a major dam on the Kuanza River to provide power for industrial development in the north central province of Malange.

Egypt

Egypt was among the earliest African countries to have diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union: these were initiated in August 1943. In 1952 a national-democratic revolution brought Gamal Abdel Nasser to power. In the following years Egyptian-Soviet cooperation took several forms.

For decades engineers had considered ways to control the waters of the Nile, to prevent the extremes of devastating floods and drought, and to increase the area which could be irrigated and sown to crops. During the time that Egypt was a British colony or semi-colony, no feasible plan could be developed. After 1952 the new government returned to the problem of building a great dam on the Nile. After some false starts, a consortium of West German, British and French companies secured agreement from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a \$270 million loan, \$55 million of which was to come from the US. At the last moment, however, the US reneged, alleging the Egyptian government was too inexperienced and too unstable to carry through such a vast project.

Speaking at a celebration of the fourth anniversary of the revolution a short time later, Nasser vowed the dam would be built, and went on to announce nationalization of the Suez Canal, noting that the Suez Canal Company had been robbing the Egyptian people of 35 million pounds a year.

In the resulting furor, the Soviet Government stood firmly behind Egypt, vigorously protesting against the British, French and US attack, including ultimately a proposal that the Soviets should send troops, together with other UN member states, to end the aggression.

After a ceasefire was declared, the West continued its pressure, this time by economic means. Nasser later observed: "Last winter we had only one month's reserve of wheat, and we were short of oil. It was necessary to sell our cotton. We appealed to the West, but met with refusal. Then the Russians sold us wheat and oil. They bought our cotton and helped us survive, they helped us avoid

Western domination.''⁵

In December 1958 an agreement was signed for Soviet participation in building the Aswan High Dam and associated hydroelectric power facilities and on granting Egypt the needed loan of nearly 300,000 rubles. Soviet organizations designed the dam—then the world's biggest—the power station and transmission lines; designed, manufactured and assembled all the equipment; and assumed technical management of the project. It was also necessary to train tens of thousands of Egyptian workers, both on the site and at specially constructed training facilities. Soviet experts also participated in careful plans to resettle the farmers whose lands were to be flooded by the 5,420 sq. km. reservoir. After years of heroic effort, the Nile was dammed in May 1964. By 1972 annual profits from operation of the dam and its associated complex had reached 500 million Egyptian pounds, which substantially exceeded the cost of construction.

From the time of the 1952 revolution the USSR participated in more than 100 industrial projects in the petrochemical industry, electronics, power generation, machine tool construction, the pharmaceutical industry and others, including the modernization of the Helwan Iron and Steel Works originally built by Western firms. Soviet experts have also participated in a number of land reclamation and agricultural projects, and in organizing 43 training centers in various fields.

The USSR also provided constant diplomatic support to Egypt and other front-line states in their struggle against Israeli aggression, severing diplomatic relations with Israel in 1967, and providing a dependable source of military equipment and supplies to them.

After the death of Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1970, leaders came to power in Egypt who altered the country's course of development and reopened it to the economic activity of Western-based multinational firms. In 1976 the Egyptian government announced termination of the 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR. The Soviet response was measured: "The Soviet Union has pursued and will continue to pursue a principled, consistent policy aimed at promoting friendly relations with the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Egyptian people." Thus, the door is open for a future in which Egyptian-Soviet cooperation may be resumed.

Mongolia

The first nation outside the USSR's borders to take the non-capitalist path of development was Mongolia.⁷

After centuries of Chinese domination, the feudal lords of Mongolia proclaimed independence in 1911. A triple agreement by tsarist Russia, China and Mongolia in 1915 reduced the country's status to that of an autonomous part of

China.

After the October Revolution the Chinese tightened their grip. However, a strongly rooted peasant revolutionary movement, taking fresh inspiration from events in Soviet Russia, overthrew the Chinese regime in March 1921, forced the Chinese troops to withdraw, and called for Soviet help against the marauding white guard bands of Baron Ungern. A people's government was proclaimed on July 11, 1921.

The Mongolian people faced enormous problems. Almost all were poor and illiterate. Diseases were rampant. More than half the male population were Buddhist monks. The economy was entirely based on nomadic stock breeding.

On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution, the Mongolian scholar B. Shirendyb noted:

The experience of the Mongolian People's Republic has shown that any economically and culturally backward country could, with the aid of a developed socialist country, make, in a short period of time, a long leap in social development and, on this basis, start building socialism.⁸

Mongolian-Soviet cooperation began with military aid. Red Army troops remained in the country at the Mongolian government's request until 1925. When, after being repulsed by Mongolian troops in 1935 and 1936, the Japanese in 1939 invaded Mongolia, the government called on Soviet military aid under terms of mutual aid agreements between the two countries. In turn, Mongolian troops fought side by side with the Red Army throughout World War II, finally participating in the rout of the Japanese Kwantung Army in Manchuria. The Mongolian people donated hides, food and clothing to help the Soviet war effort. Today, in the center of the capital city of Ulan Bator there stands a tank whose Mongolian crew fought all the way to Berlin.

In 1923 the USSR and Mongolia signed the country's first fair and mutually beneficial trade agreement. The next year the Soviets agreed to the Mongolian government's request to help organize the Mongolian Trade and Industrial Bank which laid the basis for a national trade, finance and credit system so that a socialist sector could begin to develop in agriculture and industrial development could begin. In the 1930s the USSR granted Mongolia a series of long-term loans on favorable terms.

Another example of Soviet help was the provision in 1937 of 10 machine and hay mowing stations, equipped with 50 tractors, 550 hay mowers, 325 horse rakes and other equipment. Soviet workers trained their Mongolian colleagues to operate and maintain the machinery.

The country's first large industrial enterprise, the Ulan Bator industrial complex, was built with Soviet help in 1934 and was later expanded. Its component factories processed the products of stock breeding—leather goods, felt and woolen knitted goods.

In 1928 there were only 300 industrial workers in Mongolia, but by 1940 factory and office workers and their families made up 10 per cent of the population.

In the late 1940s and 1950s the USSR helped Mongolia develop mining and oil production, and increase its food processing facilities, power generation, production of construction materials, etc. In the 1960s this process intensified, with the Soviets assisting in construction and start-up of some 90 industrial enterprises. By 1965 changes in the economy had reached a level where nearly half the economically active population were office and factory workers, and economic activity, in state and cooperative sectors, was fully socialist.

The Soviet Union and other socialist countries continue to provide a great deal of help to Mongolia, which holds a special status in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) which assures it priority consideration to continue to bring its level of development up to that of the highly developed members of CMEA.

Afghanistan

Aspects of the early relations between Afghanistan and the USSR have already been discussed. A highlight was the 1928 visit of King Amanullah to Moscow. He was the first foreign head of state to visit the USSR. During his stay an agreement was reached in principle for expanded economic and cultural ties. Amanullah was overthrown the next year, and succeeding governments reverted to the old repressive feudal pattern. However, an important agreement was concluded in 1931: the Treaty of Neutrality and Mutual Non-Aggression, observance of which was valuable to both countries during World War II.

Significant economic cooperation began with an agreement signed in 1956, under which the USSR granted Afghanistan a credit of \$100 million for a 30 year period, at two per cent per year interest, to be repaid in Afghanistan's traditional exports: cotton, wool, dried fruit and hides. Power projects were built under the agreement—the hydroelectric power stations at Pul-i-Khumri and Naglu, the latter supplying power to the capital city of Kabul and the surrounding region. In keeping with the very low state of industrialization, other projects emphasized light industry. The Jangalak motor vehicle repair plant also manufactures various household items and implements for industry and agriculture, and the so-called "Great Silo of Kabul," a combination bakery-flour mill-grain elevator, supplies much of the baked goods for the capital.

Another very important activity begun during this period was prospecting for natural gas, oil and minerals. Soviet geologists helped compile a comprehensive geological map which revealed resources of coal, iron ore and various other minerals. Also revealed was a rich deposit of natural gas in the northern part of the country, around Shibarghan. Soviet workers and scientists assisted

in all stages of developing facilities for processing the gas. The facility long ago paid for itself, and now earns substantial profits for the Afghan government through export of the gas to the USSR. Along the way, Soviet scientists and workers taught their Afghan colleagues on the job, and many Afghans associated with the project pursued their training further in the USSR. The project has also provided power for the surrounding region, and chemical fertilizer production based on natural gas has been developed.

Cooperation in agriculture has included development of dams and irrigation systems. One of these, near the town of Ghazni, made possible irrigation of more than 20,000 hectares. Another laid the basis for development of a vast agricultural complex around Jalalabad, where a formerly very arid region has been turned into richly productive orchards and fields. During three years of work, the Soviets helped construct a large reservoir, build irrigation canals and remove stones from the surrounding land. Soviet experts then helped develop the country's first two mechanized farms—Hadda and Gaziabad—where now more than 9,000 formerly landless peasants raise fruit tree saplings and young pedigreed livestock for neighboring farmers and provide them with advice. The Soviet Union also provides assistance in combatting plant and animal diseases, sends high quality seeds and agricultural equipment, and aids in training Afghan agricultural experts.

In a mountainous country like Afghanistan, where railroads are impractical, highways are very important for transportation. The USSR helped build the major north-south artery, the Salang Highway which connects Kabul with the Afghan-Soviet border, and the Turgundi-Herat-Kandahar Highway encircling the western and southern regions. A recently completed joint project is the bridge spanning the Amu Darya River, which greatly facilitates transport of goods from one country to the other. These programs have resulted in the training of Afghan experts who can now handle all aspects of road building.

Another major project is the Kabul House-Building Plant, constructed in the mid-1960s, which provides prefabricated panels for apartment buildings, factories and other types of construction. At first 40 Soviet engineers worked with the Afghan staff. By 1981 only three remained, but a planned doubling of the plant's capacity was expected to increase the number again temporarily. The director, an Afghan, had studied for six years in the USSR to earn his civil engineering degree.

These projects were started while Afghanistan was under feudal rule, or as after 1973, still under feudal and tribal domination. In 1975 over 60 per cent of goods produced in the state sector, 70 per cent of hard surface roads, and 60 per cent of electricity resulted from projects in which the Soviets cooperated.

After the April 1978 revolution brought a national-democratic government to power, Afghan-Soviet cooperation was intensified. Soviet troops, which had helped train the Afghan army ever since 1921, have been present in the country

since December 1979 at the Afghan government's request under terms of a friendship and mutual assistance treaty signed in December 1978, because of the threat caused by rebel feudal and tribal forces concentrated across the border with Pakistan and aided by the US, China and other countries.

The various forms of economic and social cooperation, and Afghan-Soviet trade, have also been stepped up. The Soviet Union has printed some 8,000,000 books for the literacy program which is overcoming the 95 per cent illiteracy of prerevolutionary days. Soviet physicians and other health professionals are helping to establish the country's first health network serving the ordinary people. Before the military situation in the struggle with the anti-government forces was stabilized, many rebel attacks on farmers resulted in a drop in agricultural production, and the Soviets donated sizable quantities of food to help make up the loss. A number of new agreements have been signed for the training of teachers, health personnel and other professionals and skilled workers both in Afghanistan and in the USSR. As of 1981 some 70 industrial projects had been completed with Soviet aid, and another 45 were in progress.⁹

Notes

1. Daniel Rosenberg, *Swords into Plowshares*: New York: National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, 1982, p.32.
2. E. A. Tarabrin, ed., *USSR and Countries of Africa*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1980, p. 26.
3. V. Belov et al., *Socialist Policy of Peace*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979, pp. 63-64.
4. E. A. Tarabrin, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
5. Georgi Sukharev, *Truth and Falsehood about the Aswan Dam*, Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, p. 17.
6. E. A. Tarabrin, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
7. Material in this section is based on the author's observations and information gathered during a visit to Mongolia in 1972.
8. B. Shirendyb, *By-Passing Capitalism*. Ulan Bator, M.P.R. State Publishers, 1968, p. 65.
9. The material in this section is compiled from the author's observations during two visits to Afghanistan in 1980 and 1981, and from the Afghan English-language newspaper *Kabul New Times*.

KAREN N. BRUTENTS

The Soviet Union and the Emergent Nations

The Communist Party and the Soviet state attach the greatest importance to relations with the emergent nations. This was prominently featured in the review of international problems by the 26th Congress of the CPSU, with Leonid Brezhnev making the particular point that "among the important results of the Party's international activity in the period under review we can list the visible expansion of cooperation with countries that have liberated themselves from colonial oppression."

Relations Based on Goodwill and Cooperation

Extensive links at government level between the Soviet Union and the former colonial and semicolonial world were established immediately after the abolition of the old colonial empires, as scores of newborn nations entered the sphere of world politics. The line which the USSR has taken in this respect was a direct follow-up of the one the Party of Lenin took on the national and national-colonial question right from the opening days of its own struggle. The Soviet state and the CPSU have all along regarded relations with what had once been colonial oppressed nations as strategic and, moreover, ideologically fundamental, rather than tactical or time serving. The common struggle against imperialism (having its specific forms and tasks in each historical period), support for the peoples' struggle for liberation and independence, and solidarity with the progressive social forces of that part of the world are an important matter of principle to us.

It is for this reason that the Soviet Union's relations (and subsequently the relations of other socialist countries) with the emergent countries have become state-to-state relations of a special kind, resting on a progressive and stable base and with profoundly democratic principles behind them. Politically, these express the irresistible tendency to affirm the independence and equal rights of peoples and nations. What brings us together in the economic area is the recognition of the need for a restructuring of the world economy in line with the principles of equal international economic relations and cooperation, to our mutual benefit.

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The approach of the Soviet Union and its policy of promoting unity with oppressed peoples and supporting their liberation movement are of historic importance for the world-wide anti-imperialist struggle and for the destinies of the still-subject world.

But for that, there would have been no appreciable shrinking of the area of imperialist domination, no sweeping defeat of colonialism, no winning of independence by oppressed peoples. Could anyone fail to see that events would have taken an entirely different course if the freedom-seeking peoples of the colonies and semicolonies had been left alone to face imperialism and its mammoth war machine? Without the internationalist policy of the Soviet Union and without its example and backing, the emergent nations could not have traversed the rather long distance that today lies between them and their erstwhile colonial and oppressed status.

Soviet policy has had a beneficial effect on the very process of emergence of newborn nation-states, on the evolution of their international standing and the self-determined economic and cultural development which progressively was freed from imperialist shackles. Moreover, relations with the Soviet Union have served as a kind of laboratory for the emergent nations to conduct their foreign relations from a position of equality.

Finally, much of the credit for the very fact that the oppressed peoples have not developed an irreversible feeling of hatred and mistrust toward the white man, despite all the racist practices of colonialists, goes to Soviet policy as well.

At present, the world that has broken away from the grip of colonialism represents over a hundred nations and over half the population of the globe. They possess gigantic resources and vast potentialities. The sovereignty of these nations has been strengthened and their influence in world politics and economy has been growing. The course of events has abundantly borne out Lenin's prediction that they would have an important part to play in world social development. Today open battles with colonialism have essentially given way to a less visible and more workaday and "evolutionary" opposition by the emergent nations to the scheming of imperialism.

Yet it would be a mistake to believe that the role of Soviet policy and the value of socialism's support for the peoples of former colonies have diminished in the present setting. Imperialism has by no means given up its attempts at changing to its own advantage the world's new balance of forces resulting from the growth of socialism and the collapse of the colonial system. Hence its attacks on the developing countries and on their gains form part of its strategy. At the slightest opportunity, it is as ready as ever to use the big stick against newly independent nations. Callous pressure on Egypt following the death of Sadat, open threats against Libya, annexation of the Golan Heights, the use of reactionary regimes and mercenaries for attacks against Angola, Chad,

Seychelles, and so on, have all demonstrated imperialism's increased truculence against the emergent nations.

The strengthening of ties and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist states is for the developing countries a historical necessity, a guarantee of their national independence and national revival, a prerequisite for the growth of the role of these countries in world development and for their own, genuine contribution to the progress of mankind.

Of great significance in the further growth of understanding and cooperation between the Soviet Union and the newly free countries at this stage is their common interest in resisting the attempts of the most aggressive circles of imperialism to return to the time of the cold war. Practice shows that the developing countries are among the first to suffer from an aggravation of the international situation. In regard to them, the most aggressive representatives of imperialist policy immediately shift emphasis onto power tactics, onto crude pressure and diktat. This is exactly what is happening today.

As Leonid Brezhnev told the 26th Congress: "No one should have any doubts, comrades, that the CPSU will consistently continue the policy of promoting cooperation between the USSR and the newly free countries, of consolidating the alliance of world socialism and the national liberation movement." Unquestionably, this position of the CPSU inspires the peoples fighting against imperialism, colonialism and racism, for freedom and independence, with new strength and confidence. It will provide the needed impetus to the further strengthening of relations between the Soviet Union and the newly independent states.

Links with Socialist- and Capitalist-Oriented States

The Soviet Union bases its relations with the newly free countries on the principles of respect for national sovereignty, equality, noninterference in internal affairs and mutually beneficial cooperation. The ideological, political and social content of Soviet policy and the understanding that the USSR shows for the vital interests of the peoples of the developing countries are the basis for its realistic, effective and flexible approach to the enormous diversity of these countries' specific features, including their political differences when they do arise.

Friendly ties link the Soviet Union with the countries of socialist orientation which are implementing a fundamentally new and important line of anti-imperialist struggle and social progress in the world of former colonies and semicolonies. The Soviet Union is actively developing political and economic relations with these socialist-oriented countries and rendering them assistance in strengthening their defense capability, a factor of particular significance in the conditions of the increased aggressiveness of imperialism. Regular ties with

the CPSU permit the governing revolutionary-democratic parties, which are still at the crossroads of diverse social and ideological influences, to draw on the rich experience of the CPSU and get to know socialism in practice, in reality.

Under present-day conditions the position and role of a country in the world arena are determined not only by the social and economic forms that prevail or develop in it, but also by its position in relation to the political system of imperialism and by its attitude to imperialist policy and strategy.

In this context mention should be made of the solid base for Soviet cooperation with those newly free countries which follow the capitalist road of development but pursue a policy of upholding and consolidating national sovereignty in politics and the economy. In the relations of these countries with imperialist states, the contradictions stemming from their opposition to the general line of imperialism — on questions of peace and detente, in attitudes to national liberation movements, in terms of resistance to neocolonialist policy, and so forth — show themselves and often intensify along with growing intercapitalist contradictions.

Soviet policy, helping as it does to strengthen the national independence of the former colonies and semicolonies and providing ample scope for equal political, stable, and mutually beneficial economic cooperation (which is especially important in view of the destructive crisis phenomena in the capitalist world), is an effective vehicle for the promotion of friendly relations with these countries. A striking example of this is the close cooperation of the Soviet Union with India, cooperation that has been steadily growing stronger and richer. The above-mentioned facts have undoubtedly played their part in the development of Soviet relations with Brazil and Mexico, which have already reached a fairly high level of economic progress, and with other Latin American countries seeking to rid themselves of their traditional dependence on the USA.

The Soviet Union has also expanded contacts with a number of countries which still largely depend on the Western imperialist powers economically and politically and follow in the wake of imperialist policies on a number of substantive questions.

To begin with, in the ruling circles of such countries (with the exception, naturally, of imperialism's open puppets) there are, as a rule, forces — and rather influential ones at that — which orient themselves to national interests and which would like to get their countries' dependence eased.

Secondly, in the conditions obtaining today, the governments of such countries (again with the exception of those leaning solely on foreign bayonets) are unable to rule without responding, even though only demagogically, to the sentiments of the public which more and more actively express patriotic feelings.

Third, true to their nature, imperialism's politicians who are interested in enrolling the firm support of these countries' leadership are still unable to give

up traditional habits and sometimes act rather crudely and even arrogantly, and encounter a corresponding reaction. In these conditions, the Soviet policy with its accent on the principles of equality and noninterference in domestic affairs becomes particularly attractive. Even the influential forces of this group of countries, which are ideologically hostile to our system, increasingly realize the practical need and expediency of promoting relations with the Soviet Union.

The development of cooperation between the Soviet Union and these countries accords with the interests of the latter's patriotic and democratic forces and facilitates the mounting of the anti-neocolonialist tendency.

It is only natural that relations with this group of countries should develop in a particularly difficult manner. The reason is simply that this is where imperialism has its most influential allies and agents as well as various special opportunities for diktat, and because the zigzags and vacillations of the ruling exploiter groups and classes, which are generally typical for the developing countries, are even more frequent and more abrupt here. These groupings are more or less torn between two sets of contradictory motives: on the one hand, there is the striving to consolidate their countries' independence and their own position with respect to imperialism and, with this aim in view, to develop relations with the Soviet Union, while on the other hand, there is the class instinct which tells them to fence themselves off from the USSR and look for a common language with the imperialists.

Newly Free Countries Respond to Anti-Sovietism

For decades now, the line toward undermining ties between the newly free and the socialist community states and fomenting breaks between them has been part and parcel of the imperialist policy. It is one of the levers of the struggle against national liberation movements and of the pursuance of neocolonialist objectives. Simultaneously, it is a component of the anti-Soviet and antisocialist strategy of imperialism in the drive to use newly free countries as an arena of a cold war against the socialist world.

This line has grown noticeably more prominent in connection with the weakening of imperialism's positions in the world, the growth of socialism's might, and the fact that the role of developing countries has tangibly increased in world political and economic relations in the 1970s.

These countries are the suppliers of extremely valuable raw materials to the capitalist world. They are also a source of monopoly profits, and in addition they have become prominent suppliers of certain types of industrial output.

Some developing countries are of key importance for imperialism's "food strategy" which is being worked out at present; i.e., a plan for using food as a weapon in the struggle against the forces of peace, progress and socialism.

Lastly, the imperialists link their military and strategic designs with the

liberated countries. Imperialism is escalating its military and political activity in many parts of the former colonial and semicolonial world. Suffice it to point to the buildup of the US armed forces in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, the Indian Ocean and a zone adjacent to Australia and Oceania. Plans are afoot to create a military bloc composed of the countries of the so-called Southern cone of the Western hemisphere and to militarize the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Meanwhile, it has been in the former colonies and dependencies that imperialism suffered major setbacks in the 1970s. Those setbacks were particularly painful against the background of the growing might of socialism and the changing alignment of forces between the two systems. As a result, the imperialists began to search for ways of regaining some of their lost positions and mount an offensive. As might be expected, imperialism chose as a target of its attacks cooperation between the newly independent countries and the socialist states. This cooperation is a serious obstacle to imperialist expansion in the world of former colonies and semicolonies.

While spreading the worn-out myth of a "Soviet military threat" on a global scale and accusing the Soviet Union of harboring "aggressive designs" against the newly independent countries, the neocolonialist strategists have not given up their traditional policy either. They continue to scare other countries with the bugaboo of "communist infiltration" as practiced by the Soviet Union. The active use of this thesis is designed to influence the social changes and the exacerbation of class antagonisms in those countries and, in a number of cases, the rise of political movements under Islamic slogans.

The present US Administration is also trying to use the phenomenon of international terrorism as a means of undermining cooperation between the Soviet Union and the developing nations. Equating Soviet support for the national liberation movements with support for terrorism, the imperialists claim that the Soviet position causes international tensions and threatens the stability of regimes in newly independent countries. The real meaning of such allegations may be seen from the fact that the charges of "terrorism" are brought against the Palestinian Arabs fighting against the Israeli aggressors, the freedom fighters in Namibia, and the patriots of El Salvador who are fighting against a US-backed military and terrorist dictatorship.

The imperialists are also trying to turn the struggle for the establishment of a new international economic order into an arena of subversive maneuvers and intrigues against cooperation between the developing and the socialist countries. However absurd this may seem, they are doing everything they can to get the newly independent countries to demand that the socialist countries also pay for the damage done the newly independent countries during the centuries of their colonial exploitation by imperialism.

The calculations of the imperialist strategies are simple. As a result of the

joint struggle of the socialist and the developing countries, a number of important political questions on which they have concentrated their efforts — the elimination of traditional colonialism, for example — are very close to being solved in practice. Under such circumstances, making claims on the socialist community in connection with the new international economic order could, according to the reasoning of imperialist politicians, cause tension in relations between the socialist and the newly independent countries and even upset cooperation between them.

Peking is now taking an obvious and active part in subversive activities against cooperation between the newly free and socialist countries. It serves imperialism — though naturally it contains pursuing its own hegemonistic aims as well — by acting as one of the major channels of anti-Soviet influence on the newly independent countries.

Hence imperialism continues to woo China while never relaxing its other efforts to upset cooperation between the socialist and the newly free countries. The danger of such a line and its ability to complicate the development of this cooperation should not be underrated.

Administering a rebuff to imperialism's designs is a common cause, a joint task for the community of socialist nations and the newly independent countries, especially for the latter's patriotic and progressive forces interested in curbing the imperialist policy of aggression and diktat, strengthening the cause of peace, and advancing the free and independent development of their countries.

The experience of the past decade has shown that success in the struggle for the complete liberation of former colonies and dependent countries from all forms of imperialist control — for the affirmation of the sovereignty of those countries over their natural resources, for winning positions of equality, in keeping with their potentialities and resources, within the world's political and economic relations — is possible only with the support of the Soviet Union and in conditions of cooperation between the newly free countries and the entire socialist community. This experience has also shown the full significance of such cooperation for the effort of countering the aggressive imperialist policy and for strengthening the cause of peace — an indispensable condition for the former colonies and semicolonies to reach their national goals.

In other words, for the newly independent countries, cooperation with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community has remained, in the 1980s, too, not only a question of foreign-policy orientation, but also one of loyalty to their national interests, loyalty to the demands of independent and progressive development. □

GERALD HORNE

The Impact of Soviet Nationalities Policy on Afro-American Liberation

What has been the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution on the struggle for Afro-American liberation? It is fair to say that we might still be faced with Jim Crow and apartheid-like segregation but for the events of October 1917. For it is clear that the US, as its leaders noted time and time again, was handicapped in its competition for "hearts and minds" in the Third World nations because of a sorry record of racism at home; at minimum segregation barriers had to fall as a result. But the option for development presented by the socialist camp led by the USSR was the critical element in this process. In addition, it is precisely because of the Soviet Union that countries in Asia and Africa were able to achieve independence in the post-World War II era.

The evidence to substantiate this thesis is daunting. The legendary W.E.B. Du Bois, a frequent visitor to the USSR during his lifetime, in commenting on the NAACP's anti-Jim Crow victories in court put it bluntly:

No such decision(s) would have been possible without the world pressure of communism led by the Soviet Union. It was simply impossible for the United States to continue to lead a "Free World" with race segregation kept legal over a third of its territory.¹

Though it may be surprising to some, this view was basically in accord with that of the NAACP leadership and its allies; shortly after Walter White died in 1955, a memorial to him observed that "He always stressed the influence of foreign relations upon domestic problems, racial, and otherwise." Roy Wilkins, speaking in 1951 before an assemblage of Black New Jersey dentists, agreed and added the concept that if the US wanted to defeat the Communists internationally, then segregation had to go. Walter Reuther, speaking at the 50th anniversary meeting of the NAACP, warned that segregation "can be American democracy's Achilles heel in Asia and Africa where the great millions of the human family live." The Department of International Justice and Goodwill of the Churches of Christ in the US observed that "Racial discrimination and segregation in the West, particularly in the United States, has become a powerful factor in world affairs . . . (it) undercut(s) our moral

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position among the darker-skinned peoples of Asia and Africa." Conversely, Marion Wright of the Southern Regional Conference warned of the attempt by segregationists to proclaim "that desegregation is a Communist device and that the Supreme Court is a tool of Moscow."²

The USSR's Impact on the Civil Rights Upsurge

Historians have been unusually perspicacious in detecting various facets of this trend. In explicating the civil rights thrust during the Truman administration, Mary Frances Berry has pointed out that "The Cold War, the struggle for economic and social development in the non-white nations . . . were factors which made this new reform politically expedient." Carl Solberg quotes James Baldwin as saying that "the rise of Africa in world affairs" had "everything to do" with the civil rights thrust of the 1950s, if only through providing US Blacks a militant example to follow. The beginning of the end for Jim Crow "seems to have begun with Kwame Nkrumah," DuBois' prime pupil. Solberg adds:

If the United States now judged security its supreme problem in a world that was two-thirds non-white, then for it to go on handling its race problem at home by official discrimination against Blacks was quite untenable . . . Although few involved would have said so at the time, the 1954 Supreme Court case, *Montgomery, Little Rock, Birmingham* — all were engagements fought in the Cold War struggle between East and West to prevail in the Third World.

William Leuchtenburg has conceded that President Eisenhower ". . . understood, too, that in a struggle with the Soviet Union for the allegiance of the Third World evidence of racial discrimination in the United States was a decided handicap." Carl Brauer has described graphically how these forces beset President Kennedy.

The Birmingham crisis touched another sensitive Kennedy nerve when it attracted a great deal of publicity abroad. . . . In several countries, particularly in Ghana and Nigeria, the media poured out caustic denunciation of the racial outrage. Radio Moscow, after a hesitant beginning was currently devoting a quarter of its output to Birmingham, much of it beamed to African audiences. Given Kennedy's expansionist view of his country's role in the world, the damage Birmingham had done to America's image undoubtedly concerned him.³

In article after article and editorial after editorial, the *Crisis* drove such points home. In May 1947 editorials it was stated:

A great debate is in progress over American foreign policy. It is interesting to note that in a letter last June to the expiring Fair Employment Practices Committee, the then Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote: "the existence of discrimination against minority groups in the United States is a handicap in our relations with other countries.

The Department of State, therefore, has good reason to hope for a continued and increased effectiveness of public and private efforts to do away with these discriminations." . . . (it is) estimated that the cost of the campaign to root Communists out of government jobs will cost \$50,000,000 . . . If the most effective way to combat Communism is to strengthen democracy, why doesn't the government spend \$50,000,000 to guarantee Negroes their rights as citizens?

Later, the *Crisis* resorted to quoting from the left-liberal *Nation* to emphasize a similar notion:

Jim Crow at home seems to have bankrupted our diplomatic resources even more than has a boiling Africa or Asia . . . Americans may maintain that social change cannot be brought about by legislation, but the people of India, Iran and other Asiatic countries know that it can be . . .⁴

The NAACP was not afraid to raise these sensitive issues in the context of explosive international events. They agreed with Soviet Ambassador Jacob Malik when he asked how could Governor James Byrnes hit at "inequality" in Eastern Europe when it festered in South Carolina. "Governor Byrnes had no reply . . . This is further proof that a man like Governor Byrnes has no business on the American delegation to the UN. His continued presence . . . lends an air of hypocrisy to our position on human rights." They cited approvingly UN Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge when he said:

"Discrimination is "our most vulnerable point — the Achilles heel of our foreign policy . . ." Our Vice-President, Richard Nixon, confirmed this recently after his return from the Far East. He said that "the performance and activities of Americans, both individually and collectively in matters of discrimination have a profound reaction . . . No single step that we could take would do our country's prestige more good in the world than to solve all these racial problems."

With intended effect they quoted Admiral Alan G. Kirk, former ambassador to the USSR:

For years, the Soviet propaganda version of the Negro in America has lost us friends. It may lose us allies. It could get us into a war or lose a war for us. The effects of Soviet Communist propaganda have caused much of the non-Communist world to accept false [sic] generalities about the Negro in the United States.

They regularly repeated words of public figures like George Meany to similar effect and carped about emphasis on "denial of democracy" in Eastern Europe by raising the same issue in reference to the South. Finally in 1957, the year of Ghana's independence, the *Crisis* exasperatedly complained:

There is a color line in international relations . . . The West roundly denounces . . . Russian atrocities in Hungary. But who, except a few liberals, denounces French atrocities in Algeria, or British atrocities in Kenya? Americans are paying millions to get the ships running through the Suez Canal once more, but what are we doing to get the

buses running again in Tallahassee where violence directed at racial integration has forced suspension of all service . . . How can we win the confidence and support of the new United Nations members, the majority of which come from African and Asian nations, when colored people in our own country are being insulted, beaten and shot for trying to take available seats in public buses . . . Who can we blame when unfriendly nations label Uncle Sam as fraud? How can we make honest reply to the foreign leaders who ask us why we don't grant freedom to our own citizens before worrying about the peoples in the rest of the world?⁵

These lengthy condemnations of US foreign policy were complemented with resolutions of action. It was resolved, for example, "to organize an international department." Illustrative of how these words were translated into action became clear in 1951 when the NAACP sponsored a testimonial dinner for Ralph Bunche. The words in the invitation, directed at the affluent, seemed straight from a *Crisis* editorial:

. . . at this critical juncture of world history when Russia is playing up in Asia, Africa and South America every incident of racial discord . . . it can thereby demonstrate that a majority of Americans are actively opposed . . .

This appeal was persuasive. Henry Ford II headed the committee sponsoring the dinner. The invitation was signed by Eleanor Roosevelt, Eric Johnston, and Herbert Lehman — a major funder of the Association who gave as much as \$5,000 per year to the NAACP. A few months later White happily reported to Lehman on the dinner's rousing success:

Particularly significant was the fact that we were able for the first time to get distinguished leaders of business to manifest a concern about the problems of race.⁶

Of course, the critical element involved in breaking the back of Jim Crow was the civil rights movement itself, epitomized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But what facilitated the path for the movement was the resistance of the socialist camp led by the USSR. The US ruling class responded to the threat of losing international influence. This helps explain why anti-communism and anti-Sovietism are less evident among Afro-Americans than among other constituencies. And it underscores why Afro-American leaders as diverse as DuBois, Paul Robeson, Langston Hughes and William L. Patterson were friends of the USSR. In an era of saber-rattling by the latest gang of Washington hot-heads, theirs is an example well worth emulating.

Dr. DuBois Views the Soviet Union

Concomitant with the objective impact that the very existence of the USSR has had on Afro-American struggles is the view of figures like Hughes, DuBois, et. al, of the first land of socialism. It is well known that Dr. DuBois was a long-time friend of the USSR. This amity was expressed in his writing in

the *Crisis*, journal of the NAACP, in articles for Black newspapers, and in his numerous public speaking engagements. Indeed, it is probable that this friendship was a factor when the leadership of the NAACP decided to oust him in September 1948 from his second tenure with the Association, as the nippy breezes of the cold war became icier.

This, however, did not deter him. In 1950 when he ran for the US Senate from New York on the American Labor Party ticket, he did not hesitate to proclaim his admiration of the USSR in the face of hostile anti-communist propaganda. DuBois was indicted and tried as an agent of a "foreign power" during this period; though unnamed, this "power" was well recognized as being the USSR, as his effort in heading the campaign to "Ban the Bomb" — like the current nuclear freeze — was seen as being directed by the ubiquitous "hand of Moscow." When the US State Department deprived DuBois of a passport, an important reason was the attempt to prevent him from traveling to foreign countries broadcasting his admiration of socialism and advising Third World leaders to follow suit.

But though they could prevent him from flying, they could not prevent him from writing; thus his correspondence in the 1950s, with Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in particular, is replete with this type of advice. In counseling Nkrumah, a towering figure whose own personal efforts sparked the historic 1955 gathering in Bandung, Indonesia which led inexorably to the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement, he had to come up against the contrary advice of George Padmore, the publicist and activist, who disputed DuBois' notions of tight solidarity with the USSR in his words of counsel to the Ghanaian leaders. In retrospect, Nkrumah's overthrow can be seen at least partially as a product of listening to Padmore more closely than to DuBois, who virtually predicted the outcome of such a path. Nevertheless, DuBois offered similar advice to the other leaders he was in touch with during this period — Jagan of Guyana, Marryshow of Grenada, Ben Bella of Algeria, Sukarno of Indonesia, et. al.⁷

But like any good friendship, this tie between DuBois and the Soviet Union was mutually beneficial. When he finally received his passport as a result of mass pressure at home and abroad, he immediately set out for the Soviet Union. A major purpose in his mind was to spur the Soviets to establish a scholarly institute on African studies that would plumb the history of African peoples, their languages, ethnography, etc. This suggestion was adopted and today this Institute is one of the leading — if not *the* leading — bodies of this kind in the world. The books and papers and research produced as a result have not only been valuable to Africans seeking liberation but have been helpful to Afro-Americans as well.

Soviet Solidarity with Afro-American Freedom Struggles

The Soviets have also expressed political solidarity with freedom struggles in the US. Before and after his journey to the USSR, William L. Patterson was well aware of the substantial and crucial political support of leading Soviet figures and mass organizations for the Scottsboro 9. Petitions, postcards, letters, pickets, etc. were only part of this struggle. Since that time, there has been no major Afro-American freedom struggle — be it freedom for DuBois, Ben Davis, Angela Davis, the Wilmington 10 or Patterson himself — that has not seen the timely solidarity of forces in the USSR. These protests have presented a particular dilemma for the US authorities. Their clamoring about the false issue of “human rights” in the USSR has been exposed and turned on its head by the publicity generated over the special persecution of Afro-American activists. In consequence, pressure from the USSR has been especially helpful in generating freedom for such Afro-American political prisoners.

Such battles for freedom are not the only link between the Afro-American struggle for equality and Soviet Union's efforts for peace. Leaders of Operation PUSH and other civil rights activists have repeatedly emphasized the fact that military spending produces far fewer jobs than does civilian spending on such programs as health care, schools and day care. Hence, unemployment among Afro-Americans, traditionally higher than among Euro-Americans, is exacerbated by a policy of hostility directed at the Soviet Union. The MX, the B-1, the Trident are not only a danger to the existence of socialism but an even more immediate and pressing danger to the economic health of Afro-America; such maniacal military spending takes bread from the mouths of Black babies and drives their parents to ever increasing unemployment lines. Thus, when Soviet people march for peace they are aiding their Afro-American brethren and similarly when Afro-Americans demand a slash in the Pentagon budget they not only help themselves but the well-being of Soviet citizens as well.

This simple truth is not just being recognized. Dr. DuBois acknowledged it when he coordinated work in the US with the Stockholm Peace Appeal. This was also recognized at a May 1949 conference on “The Economic Crisis and the Cold War,” sponsored by the Jefferson School of Social Science. This gathering took place months before the initiation of the US adventure in the Korean peninsula as the militarists were already sharpening their knives:

Today it is reported that in New York about 20 per cent of all unemployed are Negro workers, and in Omaha about 25 per cent, while reports from Toledo and Chicago indicate that nearly half of the registered unemployment are Negroes. From Cleveland come reports that job openings for Negroes, with the exception of the dirtiest work in foundries and steel plants, have completely disappeared in basic industry. And in the brass mills of Connecticut, where lay-offs started in January and two, three and four days

of work are now the rule, the Negroes have been, as before the war, the first to be fired, while those remaining have been speeded up, down-graded and forced into the hardest jobs.⁸

This bellicose policy in Asia was in a real sense a shot over the bow at the Soviets but as the foregoing graphically indicated, an intended or unintended bulls-eye was Afro-America. “The more things change, the more they remain the same” — unfortunately, this truism continues to apply in this instance.

Thus, there has been a long-time mutually beneficial interaction between the struggles of Afro-Americans and the policies and actions of the USSR. Poets like Langston Hughes and Richard Wright have sung paeans of praise to this, novelists like Claude McKay have contributed their prose bouquets, singers like Robeson have hymned their agreement. And little wonder. Studies have shown consistently that Afro-Americans are the least anti-communist and anti-Soviet sector of the US population and the most consistent critics of imperialist policies abroad.⁹ In this there is a serendipitous coincidence that spells a bright future of peace for all humanity. □

Notes

1. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois*, N.Y., 1968, p. 333.
2. *Crisis*, 62 (May 1955), p. 262; *Crisis*, 58 (April 1951), p. 269; *Crisis*, 60 (December 1953), 615-616; Gloster Current, “Fiftieth Annual Convention — A Jubilee for Civil Rights,” *Crisis*, 66 (August-September 1959): 400-410, p. 407.
3. Mary Frances Berry, *Black Resistance/White Law: A History of Constitutional Racism in America*, N.Y., 1971, pp. 175-6. Carl Solberg, *Riding High: America in the Cold War*, N.Y., 1973. William E. Leuchtenberg, “The White House and Black America: From Eisenhower to Carter,” in M.V. Namorato, ed., *Have We Overcome? Race Relations Since Brown*, Jackson, 1979, 121-146, p. 122. Carl M. Brauer, *John F. Kennedy and the Second Reconstruction*, N.Y., 1977, p. 240.
4. *Crisis*, 54 (May 1947), p. 137; *Crisis*, 60 (January 1953), p. 39.
5. *Crisis*, 60 (November 1953), pp. 548-9; *Crisis*, 61 (April 1954), p. 233, pp. 226-9; *Crisis*, 64 (February 1957) pp. 89-90.
6. *Crisis*, 59 (May 1952), pp. 311-2; Walter White to Herbert Lehman, February 5, 1951, Special File, #931a, *Lehman Papers*.

Appendices

APPENDIX I

Constitution of the USSR

Following is the portion of the 1977 Soviet Constitution which deals with the Soviet Union's structure.

III. The National-State Structure of the USSR

Chapter 8: THE USSR — A FEDERAL STATE

Article 70. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an integral, federal, multinational state formed on the principle of socialist federalism as a result of the free self-determination of nations and the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics.

The USSR embodies the state unity of the Soviet people and draws all its nations and nationalities together for the purpose of jointly building communism.

Article 71. The Union of Socialist Republics unites:
the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Azerbaidzhan Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Article 72. Each Union Republic shall retain the right freely to secede from the USSR.

Article 73. The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its highest bodies of state authority and administration, shall cover:

1. the admission of new republics to the USSR; endorsement of the formation of new autonomous republics and autonomous regions within Union Republics;

2. determination of the state boundaries of the USSR and approval of changes in the boundaries between Union Republics;

3. establishment of the general principles for the organization and functioning of republican and local bodies of state authority and administration;

4. the ensurance of uniformity of legislative norms throughout the USSR and establishment of the fundamentals of the legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Union Republics;

5. pursuance of a uniform social and economic policy; direction of the country's economy; determination of the main lines of scientific and technological progress and the general measures for rational exploitation and conservation of natural resources; the drafting and approval of state plans for the economic and social development of the USSR, and endorsement of reports on their fulfilment;

6. the drafting and approval of the consolidated Budget of the USSR, and endorsement of the report on its execution; management of a single monetary and credit system; determination of the taxes and revenues forming the Budget of the USSR; and the formulation of prices and wages policy;

7. direction of the sectors of the economy, and of enterprises and amalgamations under Union jurisdiction, and general direction of industries under Union-Republican jurisdiction;

8. issues of war and peace, defense of the sovereignty of the USSR and safeguarding of its frontiers and territory, and organization of defense; direction of the Armed Forces of the USSR;

9. state security;

10. representation of the USSR in international relations; the USSR's relations with other states and with international organizations; establishment of the general procedure for, and coordination of, the relations of Union Republics with other states and with international organizations; foreign trade and other forms of external economic activity on the basis of state monopoly;

11. control over observance of the Constitution of the USSR, and ensurance of conformity of the Constitutions of Union Republics to the Constitution of the USSR;

12. and settlement of other matters of All-Union importance.

Article 74. The laws of the USSR shall have the same force in all Union Republics. In the event of a discrepancy between a Union Republic law and an All-Union law, the law of the USSR shall prevail.

Article 75. The territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a single entity and comprises the territories of the Union Republics.

The sovereignty of the USSR extends throughout its territory.

Chapter 9: THE UNION SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Article 76. A Union Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state that has united with other Soviet Republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Outside the spheres listed in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, a Union Republic exercises independent authority on its territory.

A Union Republic shall have its own Constitution conforming to the Constitution of the USSR with the specific features of the Republic being taken into account.

Article 77. Union Republics take part in decision-making in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Government of the USSR, and other bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in matters that come within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

A Union Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development on its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the USSR on its territory, and implement the decisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR.

In matters that come within its jurisdiction, a Union Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations subordinate to the Union.

Article 78. The territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent. The boundaries between Union Republics may be altered by mutual agreement of the Republics concerned, subject to ratification by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Article 79. A Union Republic shall determine its division into territories, regions, areas, and districts, and decide other matters relating to its administrative and territorial structure.

Article 80. A Union Republic has the right to enter relations with other states, conclude treaties with them, exchange diplomatic and consular representatives, and take part in the work of international organizations.

Article 81. The sovereign rights of Union Republics shall be safeguarded by the USSR.

Chapter 10: THE AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Article 82. An Autonomous Republic is a constituent part of a Union Republic.

In spheres not within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Union Republic, an Autonomous Republic shall deal independently with matters within its jurisdiction.

An Autonomous Republic shall have its own Constitution conforming to the Constitutions of the USSR and the Union Republic with the specific features of the Autonomous Republic being taken into account.

Article 83. An Autonomous Republic takes part in decision-making through the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR and of the Union Republic respectively, in matters that come within the jurisdiction of the USSR and the Union Republic.

An Autonomous Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development on its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the USSR and the Union Republic of its territory, and implement decisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR and the Union Republic.

In matters within its jurisdiction, an Autonomous Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations subordinate to the Union or the Union Republic.

Article 84. The territory of an Autonomous Republic may not be altered without its consent.

Article 85. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic includes the Bashkir, Buryat, Daghestan, Kabardin-Balkar, Kalmyk, Karelian, Komi, Mari, Mordovian, North Ossetian, Tatar, Tuva, Udmurt, Chechen-Ingush, Chuvash, and Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Abkhassian and Adzhar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Azerbaidzhan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

Chapter 11: THE AUTONOMOUS REGION AND AUTONOMOUS AREA

Article 86. An Autonomous Region is a constituent part of a Union Republic or Territory. The Law on an Autonomous Region, upon submission by the Soviet of People's Deputies of the Autonomous Region concerned, shall be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

Article 87. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic includes the Adygei, Gorno-Altai, Jewish, Karachai-Circassian, and Khakass Autonomous Regions.

The Azerbaidzhan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

The Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

Article 88. An Autonomous Area is a constituent part of a Territory or Region. The Law on an Autonomous Area shall be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic concerned.

APPENDIX II

Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Following is the complete text of Section IV: The Tasks of the Party in the Field of National Relations.

Under socialism the nations flourish and their sovereignty grows stronger. The development of nations does not proceed along lines of strengthening national strife, national narrow-mindedness and egoism, as it does under capitalism, but along lines of their association, fraternal mutual assistance and friendship. The appearance of new industrial centers, the prospecting and development of mineral deposits, virgin land development, and the growth of all modes of transport increase the mobility of the population and promote greater intercourse between the peoples of the Soviet Union. People of many nationalities live together and work in harmony in the Soviet republics. The boundaries between the Union republics of the USSR are increasingly losing their former significance, since all the nations are equal, their life is based on a common socialist foundation, the material and spiritual needs of every people are satisfied to the same extent, and they are all united in a single family by common vital interests and are advancing together to the common goal — communism. Spiritual features deriving from the new type of social relations and embodying the finest traditions of the peoples of the USSR have taken shape and are common to Soviet men and women of different nationalities.

Full-scale communist construction constitutes a new stage in the development of national relations in the USSR in which the nations will draw still closer together until complete unity is achieved. The building of the material and technical basis of communism leads to still greater unity of the Soviet peoples. The exchange of material and spiritual values between nations become more and more intensive, and the contribution of each republic to the common cause of communist construction increases. Obliteration of distinctions between classes and the development of communist social relations make for a greater social homogeneity of nations and contribute to the development of common communist traits in their culture, morals and way of living, to a further strengthening of their mutual trust and friendship.

With the victory of communism in the USSR, the nations will draw still closer together, their economic and ideological unity will increase and the communist traits common to their spiritual make-up will develop. However, the obliteration of national distinctions, and especially of language distinctions, is a considerably longer process than the obliteration of class distinctions.

The Party approaches all questions of national relationships arising in the course of communist construction from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism and firm pursuance of the Leninist nationalities policy. The Party neither ignores nor over-accentuates national characteristics.

The Party sets the following tasks in the sphere of national relations:

(a) to continue the all-round economic and cultural development of all the Soviet nations and nationalities, ensuring their increasingly close fraternal cooperation, mutual aid, unity and affinity in all spheres of life, thus achieving the utmost strengthening of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; to make full use of, and advance the forms of, national statehood of the peoples of the USSR;

(b) in the economic sphere, it is necessary to continue the line of comprehensive development of the economies of the Soviet republics, effect a rational geographic location of production and a planned working of natural wealth, and promote socialist division of labor among the republics, unifying and combining their economic efforts and properly balancing the interests of the state as a whole and those of each Soviet republic. The extension of the rights of the Union republics in economic management having produced substantial positive results, such measures may also be carried out in the future with due regard to the fact that the creation of the material and technical basis of communism will call for still greater interconnection and mutual assistance between the Soviet republics. The closer the intercourse between the nations and the greater the awareness of the country-wide tasks, the more successfully can manifestations of parochialism and national egoism be overcome.

In order to ensure the successful accomplishment of the tasks of communist construction and the coordination of economic activities, inter-republican economic organs may be set up in some zones (notably for such matters as irrigation, power grids, transport, etc.).

The Party will continue its policy ensuring the actual equality of all nations and nationalities with full consideration for their interests and devoting special attention to those areas of the country which are in need of more rapid development. Benefits accumulating in the course of communist construction must be fairly distributed among all nations and nationalities;

(c) to work for the further all-round development of the socialist cultures of the peoples of the USSR. The big scale of communist construction and the new victories of communist ideology are enriching the cultures of the peoples of the USSR, which are socialist in content and national in form. There is a growing ideological unity among the nations and nationalities and a greater *rapprochement* of their cultures. The historical experience of socialist nations shows that national forms do not ossify; they change, advance and draw closer together, shedding all outdated traits that contradict the new conditions of life. An international culture common to all the Soviet nations is developing. The

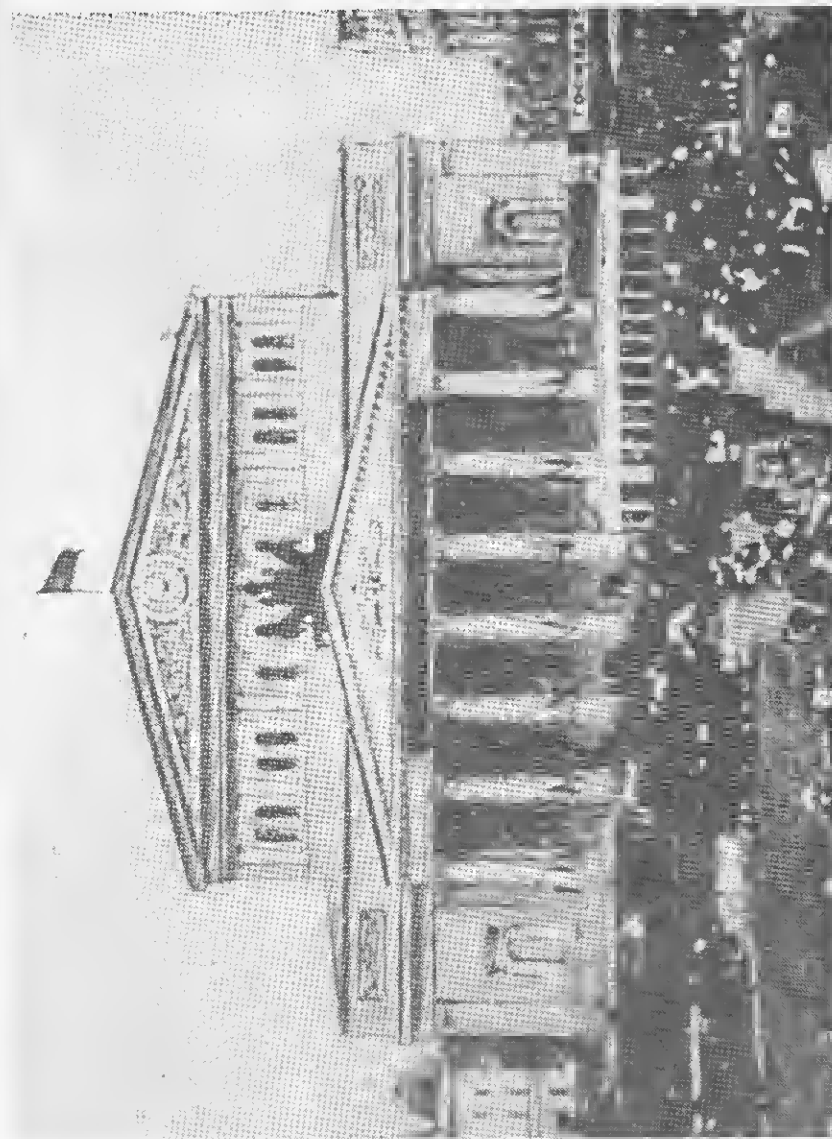
cultural treasures of each nation are increasingly augmented by works acquiring an international character.

Attaching decisive importance to the development of the socialist content of the cultures of the peoples of the USSR, the Party will promote their further mutual enrichment and rapprochement, the consolidation of their international basis, and thereby the formation of the future single world-wide culture of communist society. While supporting the progressive traditions of each people, and making them the property of all Soviet people, the Party will in all ways further new revolutionary traditions of the builders of communism common to all nations;

(d) to continue promoting the free development of the languages of the peoples of the USSR and the complete freedom for every citizen of the USSR to speak, and to bring up and educate his children, in any language, ruling out all privileges, restrictions or compulsions in the use of this or that language. By virtue of the fraternal friendship and mutual trust of peoples, national languages are developing on a basis of equality and mutual enrichment.

The voluntary study of Russian in addition to the native language is of positive significance, since it facilitates reciprocal exchanges of experience and access of every nation and nationality to the cultural gains of all the other peoples of the USSR, and to world culture. The Russian language has, in effect, become the common medium of intercourse and cooperation between all the peoples of the USSR;

(e) to pursue consistently as heretofore the principles of internationalism in the field of national relations; to strengthen the friendship of peoples as one of the most important gains of socialism; to conduct a relentless struggle against manifestations and survivals of nationalism and chauvinism of all types, against trends of national narrowmindedness and exclusiveness, idealization of the past and veiling of social contradictions in the history of peoples, and against customs and habits hampering communist construction. The growing scale of communist construction calls for the continuous exchange of trained personnel among nations. Manifestations of national aloofness in the education and employment of workers of different nationalities in the Soviet republics are impermissible. The elimination of manifestations of nationalism is in the interests of all nations and nationalities of the USSR. Every Soviet republic can continue to flourish and strengthen only in the great family of fraternal socialist nations of the USSR. □



The Bolshoi Theater, Moscow, in late 1922, at the time of the First All-Union Congress of Soviets. All photos are courtesy Novosti Press Agency Publishing House.



Delegates from Turkestan to the First All-Union Congress of Soviets, Moscow, 1922.



Tashkent University, founded in 1920, was Soviet Central Asia's first institution of higher education. In that year, these professors came from Soviet Russia to help found the new university.



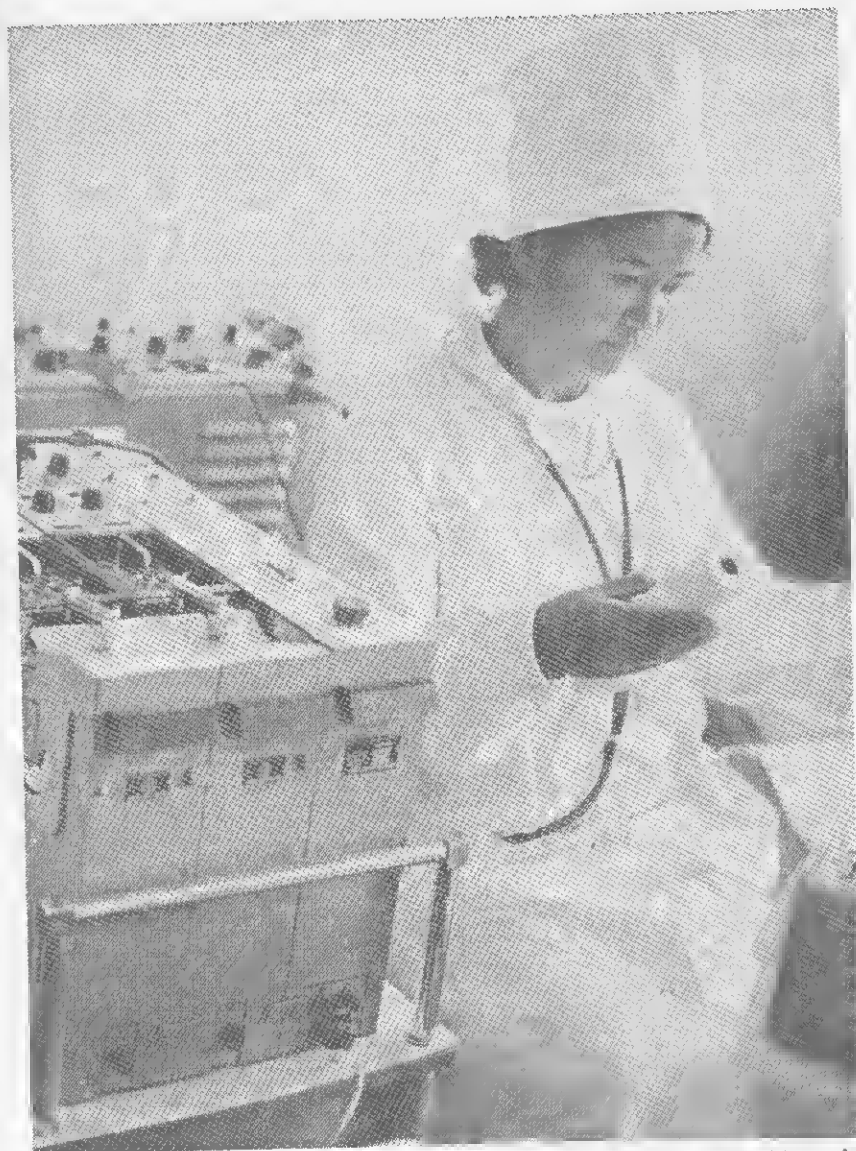
Among the workers at the Almalyk chemical plant in central Uzbekistan are more than 20 nationalities, including Russians, Kazakhs, Ukrainians, Turkmen and Jews as well as Uzbeks.



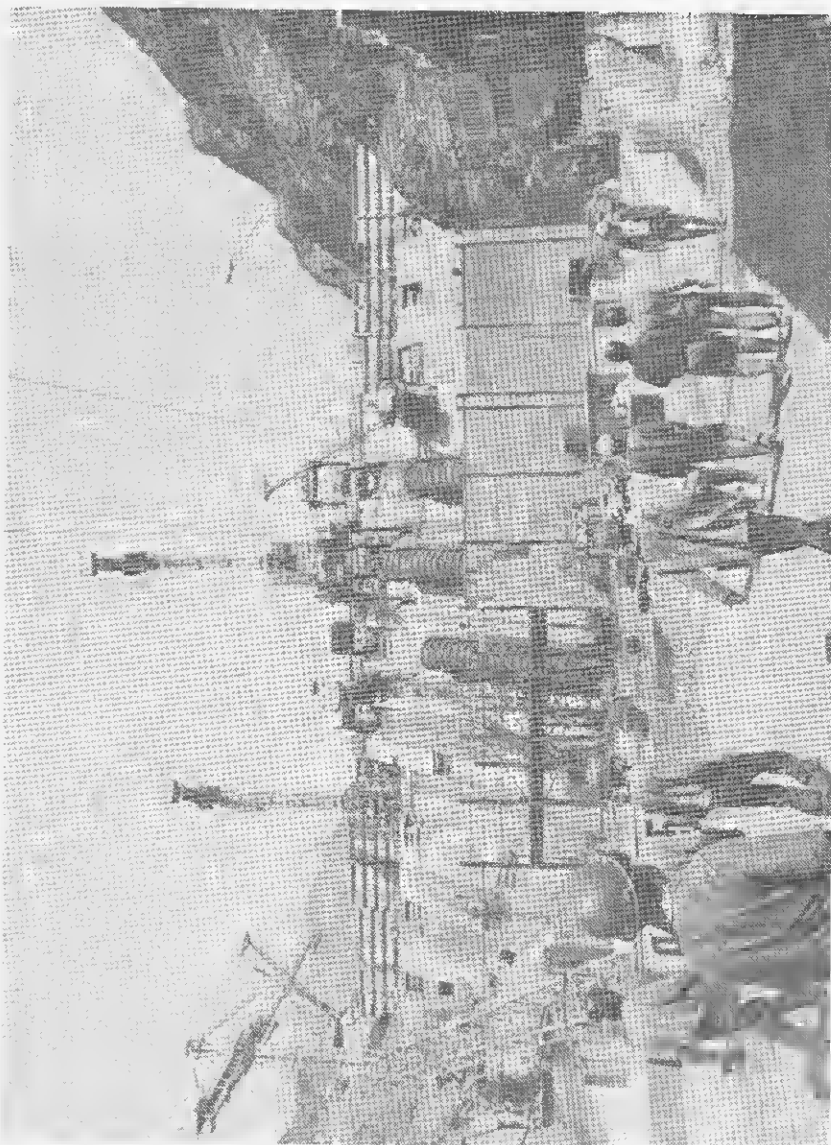
The family of Klara Niyazbayeva, director of an Alma-Ata carpet factory, includes eight nationalities: Ukrainian, Uighur, Russian, Tatar, Kazakh, Uzbek, German and Moldavian.



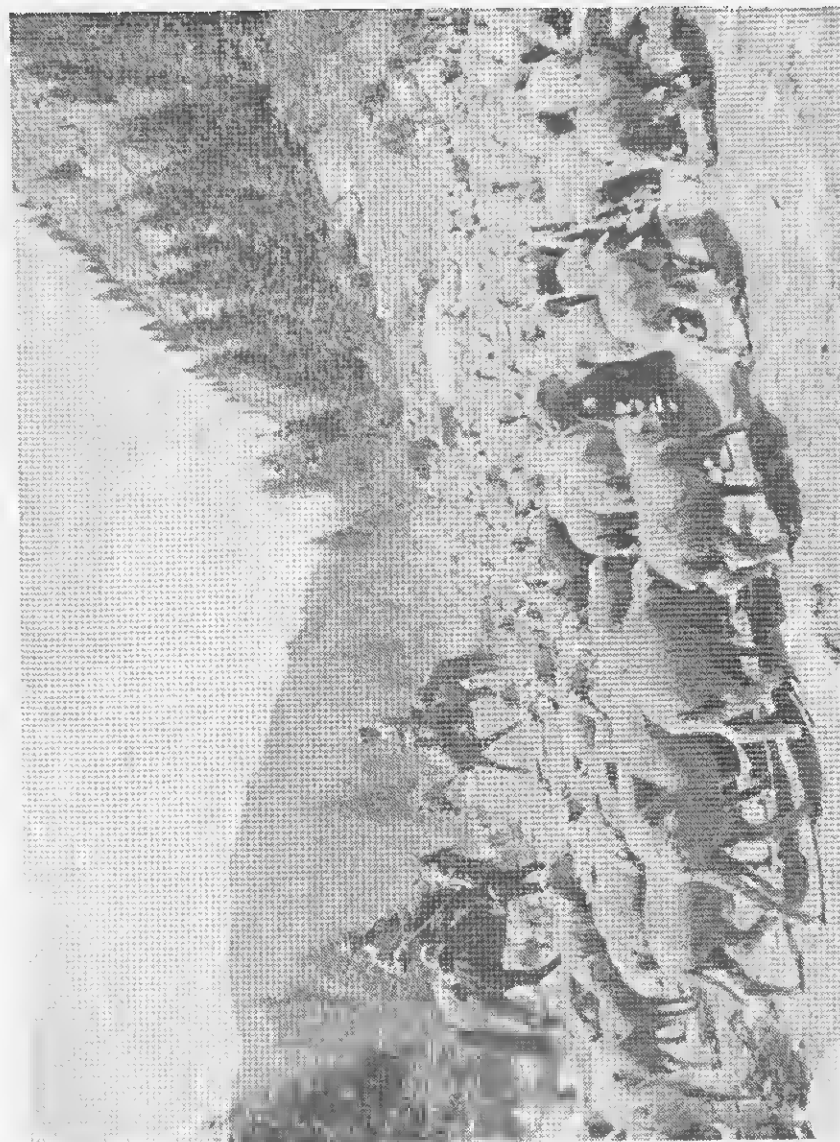
Recent graduates of the Polytechnical Institute in Ashkhahad, Turkmenia, which trains engineers for the oil and power industries, geologists and other professionals.



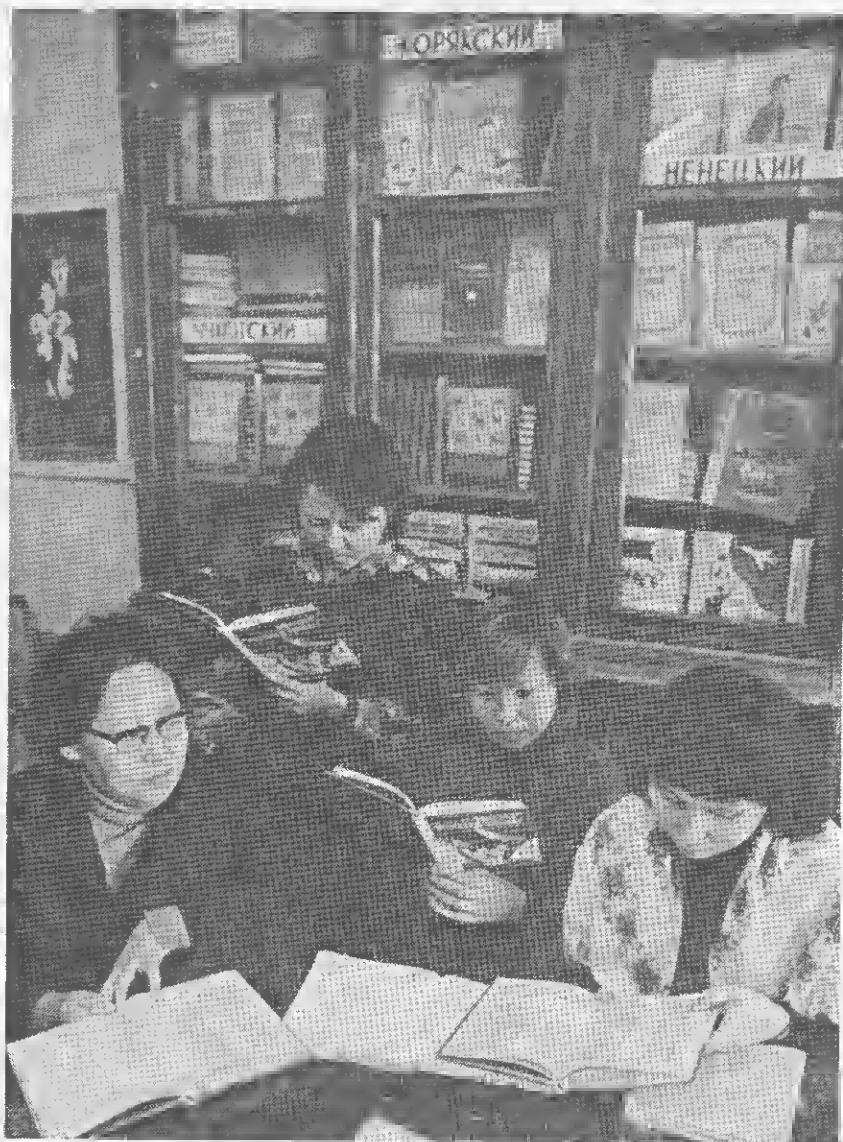
S. Kyshtoobova, Doctor of Medicine, a Kirghiz, is deputy director of the Obstetrics and Pediatrics Institute in Frunze, Kirghizia's capital.



The Kurpsai hydropower project on the Naryn River will supply power for Kirghizia's well-developed and growing modern industries.



Herding is a traditional occupation in Kirghizia.



These teachers from northern areas in Siberia are attending continuing education courses at the Herten Teacher Training Institute in Leningrad.



Pupils learning the Nanai language at the boarding school in the village of Nizhniye Khalby, Khabarovsk Territory.



Moscow's Romen Theater, founded more than 50 years ago, is the world's only professional Gypsy theater.

Nations & Peoples *The Soviet Experience*

One of the most urgent problems of our time is how to overcome racism and national oppression. This critical problem confronted the new Soviet government at the time of the October 1917 revolution.

The former tsarist empire had been a "prisonhouse of nations," with more than 100 nations and nationalities ranging from tribal and feudal societies to peoples which had attained a relatively high level of economic, social and cultural development. In these circumstances building and protecting socialism depended on ending national rivalry, racism, discrimination and exploitation and special measures to help the formerly oppressed peoples achieve equality.

The formation of the USSR in December 1922 represents the world's first effort to create a state structure specifically to serve a multinational population.

In *Nations and Peoples*, US and Soviet authors from various disciplines discuss the problems and the process of building this multinational state, and the implications of that experience for other countries throughout the world.

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